

THE INDEPENDENT

Thursday 8 January 1998

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Mo steps into the lions' den

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, will tomorrow take the audacious step of meeting loyalist inmates in the Maze prison. David McKitterick and Colin Brown report on an unprecedented move aimed at breaking out of the cycle of violence and pessimism haunting Ulster.

Mó Mowlam last night denied her decision to visit loyalist prisoners – many serving life sentences for murder – was a last, desperate throw of the dice, or a public relations gesture. She was warned that the three-year loyalist ceasefire was in peril, at a meeting in London with Gary McMichael, the leader of the Ulster Democratic Party.

Ms Mowlam told *The Independent* that she was going to the Maze to tell the loyalist prisoners that the peace process was the "only show in town".

"If we don't move the talks forward, they aren't going to see progress on the things they want."

On the key loyalist demand for prisoners to be released, she added: "I will be saying to them that questions like prisoner release will have to be addressed in the context of the settlement."

While ministers have, over the years, visited the Maze prison for occasional tours, the Mowlam visit is for the specific purpose of talking to representatives of around 130 members of the illegal Ulster Defence Association, almost all of them convicted of terrorist-type offences.

One of their number, Michael Stone, is serving three life sentences for the murders of three Catholics at a republican funeral in 1988.

The news will be seen as a bold initiative by a highly active Northern Ireland Secretary, who has made personal contact one of the keynotes of her approach.

In one sense, the prisoners may be well-disposed towards her in that they will be impressed by the gesture of a Cabinet minister entering the Maze to hear their complaints in person. On the other hand they will not be pleased by her stance that accelerated releases are not on the immediate agenda.

Ministers have often met ex-prisoners – indeed most of those on the Sinn Féin and loyalist teams at the Stormont multi-party talks have been behind bars, some serving sentences for murder. But tomorrow's visit is seen as ground-breaking in its symbolism.

If it works, it will presumably be followed sooner or later by meetings with serving IRA prisoners. It will certainly be seen as a recognition of the often highly significant role played by prisoners in the peace process.

Although most of the UDA's prisoners approved of the organisation's ceasefire in 1994, many are since said to have become disillusioned by the lack of movement towards early releases from jail. Last weekend a majority of them voted to withhold their support from the peace process.

On Tuesday they apparently gave a rough ride to Gary McMichael, leader of the UDP, the UDA's political wing, when he attempted to persuade them to persevere with the peace process.

The general fear is that the souring of the prisoners' mood could eventually lead to the withdrawal of the UDP from the peace process, followed by the collapse of the loyalist ceasefire.

It is already suspected, in fact, that the UDA may already have made an unavowed return to violence by taking part in the killing of a Catholic man in north Belfast on New Year's Eve.

Mr McMichael said yesterday: "She is taking a risk in making this decision and we welcome that. Of course we have to look and see whether all we are doing is shifting the point of crisis from today to the Maze on Friday. By no means



Bold move: Mo Mowlam is setting out to rebuild confidence in the talks process

Photograph: Kevin Lamarque

have we overcome the difficulties."

Meanwhile the Ulster Unionist Party, which has recently been highly critical of the Government, appears to have been mollified by its

meeting on Tuesday with Tony Blair, which was by all accounts a constructive encounter. The Government is hoping to "kick-start" the talks by pushing for speedy progress.

A certain amount of bridge-building also seems to have been achieved at a meeting yesterday between the Irish foreign minister, David Andrews, and the Progressive Unionist Party, which

speaks for the paramilitary Ulster Volunteer Force.

It is still, however, by no means certain that the DUP will be at the multi-party talks when they resume on Monday.

TODAY'S NEWS

Human clone pioneer dismisses ethical doubts

The US scientist who plans to set up the world's first Human Clone Clinic said yesterday he could see nothing wrong with producing endless identical human beings. Richard Seed, a physicist who wants to offer infertile couples the chance to clone an identical twin of themselves, claimed to have four couples willing to go ahead with the experiments. "Any new subject creates fear. It doesn't matter whether it's reproduction or automobiles," he said. Page 3

Psychopath convicted

A homeless teenager who plunged a knife into the head of a woman travelling alone on a train was convicted yesterday of attempted murder. Robert Buckland, 18, was remanded for psychiatric reports until next month when he will be sentenced. His victim, Alison Kennedy, 28, miraculously survived the attack in which the five-inch bladed Bowie style hunting knife had to be removed from her head in hospital. Buckland said he had intended to snatch Miss Kennedy's handbag but had thrust the knife into her skull in a rush of anger. Page 8

Heyerdahl was wrong

Fifty years ago, Thor Heyerdahl and the *Kon-Tiki* expedition appeared to prove that ancient humans could have sailed west from South America to colonise the Pacific Islands. But DNA evidence now shows his hypothesis was wrong and that his great adventure may have been misplaced. Page 9

Why women work better but men work more successfully

Men measure their success by promotion and pay increases, while women are more concerned about doing their job properly. Barrie Clement, Labour Editor, finds there is a considerable "gender gap" between the aspirations of male and female managers.



Women like to be thanked for their performance as managers, but men simply want to be propelled up the hierarchy and paid more.

Employers need to recognise the difference between the personal satisfaction women tend to strive for and the more hard-nosed and concrete rewards desired by men, according to a psychologist.

Jane Sturges, of Birkbeck College, University of London, identifies four different types of managers among 36 employees at BT – from those occupying positions just below board levels to supervisors.

Doctor Sturges describes the "climber" as the person who strives for recognition through traditional "external" criteria and whose goal is to achieve the most senior level of management. All seven of the employ-

ees in this category were men – mostly relatively young.

"Having an influence at work is not enough for them to feel successful, they have to achieve a perceived status too," Doctor Sturges told the British Psychological Society's annual occupational psychology conference at Eastbourne.

Climbers need to enjoy their work, but are very "goal oriented" in their attitude to career progression.

"The managers who fall into this category as a rule set themselves regular stretching goals and targets relating to their level of pay and their position in the hierarchy. Related to this emphasis on career goals, the climber often has a strong competitive instinct."

The "expert" sees success in terms of competency at their job and being recognised personally for being good at what they do.

Seven women and just two men were classified as experts.

They like to be regarded as specialists and seek the respect of colleagues. The expert likes to receive "positive feedback", wants to be thanked for their efforts and derives considerable satisfaction from winning awards.

"To experts, the content of the job they do is more important than their position in the hierarchy or their status within the organisation," says Doctor Sturges.

The "influencer" wants to have a "tangible and positive effect" on the organisation they work for and has little regard for promotion. For older influencers the idea of leaving a mark on their organisation is extremely important. They want to gain autonomy at work, especially those managers who have not reached senior levels.

For younger influencers, success would be achieved by attaining a level of responsibility.

Some managers have tried to achieve influence by involvement in activity outside their normal remit. The "self-realist" thinks of achievement in "very personal" terms and in a way which means little to other people. Their desire to achieve on their own terms will override the value they place on traditional career success. Self-realists find it essential that they find their work challenging at a personal level.

Age was also a crucial factor in determining which type of career success a manager favoured. Most of the climbers were relatively young and most of the influencers were predominantly older.

Even the most enlightened employers are nearly twice as likely to take on white job applicants than those from ethnic minorities.

In a study of eleven blue-chip companies, the Commission for Racial Equality found that black candidates consistently fell at two of the three main hurdles in selection procedures.

The main obstacles were encountered at the initial sift of application forms and at the final assessment centre stage where groups of applicants are scored on a variety of exercises over a period of one or two days.

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Human cloning pioneer dismisses ethical doubts

The US scientist who plans to set up the world's first Human Clone Clinic said yesterday he could see nothing wrong with producing endless identical human beings. Jeremy Laurance, Health Editor, asks if he is likely to succeed.

Richard Seed, the physicist who wants to offer infertile couples the chance to clone an identical twin of themselves, said

yesterday he regretted not having contacted Mother Teresa before she died last summer for a sample of her blood from which to produce a replica saint.

The Chicago scientist, who is little known in reproductive circles but has done fertility research in the past, claimed to have four couples willing to go ahead with the experiments. "Any new subject creates fear. It doesn't matter whether it's reproduction or automobiles," he said on BBC Radio 4's 70-day programme.

The procedure would involve taking an unfertilised egg

from the woman's ovary, removing its nucleus containing the DNA and replacing it with the nucleus of an adult cell taken from the man or the woman, or a third party. The resulting child would be the identical twin of its "parent", but 30 to 40 years younger.

Mr Seed will need the co-operation of a doctor, to remove the egg and replace the cloned embryo, and a clinic with the right equipment to realise his ambition to set up a chain of 20 cloning clinics around the country.

He claimed to be in negotiation with one clinic, which he

declined to name, but said the doctor involved had agreed to co-operate only with the consent of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine.

Yesterday, a spokesman for the society said human cloning was unacceptable and it had called for a voluntary five-year moratorium while further animal and DNA research was carried out. "We are not ready to do it in human beings and it should not be pursued," he said.

However, in the UK, consultations led by the Human Genetics Advisory Commission are to begin this year into

whether human cloning should be permitted for experimental purposes.

Although human cloning is effectively banned under the 1990 Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act, as it is in most European countries, Ruth Deech, chairman of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority argued in a hearing before the Commons Science and Technology Committee last year that possible benefits from human cloning would never be realised if a total prohibition on research were imposed.

She ruled out the production of human beings as "hanks" to

provide organs or bone marrow for transplant, or as "consolation" for bereaved parents who wished to reproduce a loved child. However, a possible application that might be acceptable was in the treatment of sufferers from a rare inherited disorder of the mitochondria - the "power-plant" of the cell - which surround the nuclei of cells and which can cause blindness and epilepsy.

By removing the nucleus - minus the defective mitochondria - from an embryo created by in-vitro fertilisation in the normal way and placing it in a donated egg stripped of its own

nucleus, a cloned baby could be created that would be the genetic offspring of its parents without the disorder. Other potential applications were likely to become evident over the next five years, she said.

A spokesman for the authority said that, in contrast to research of this kind, Mr Seed's reference to Mother Teresa demonstrated the dangers of allowing cloning to develop unfettered. "Deliberately creating a copy of an existing human being undermines the autonomy of the individual. What sort of life would a baby produced in this way have?"

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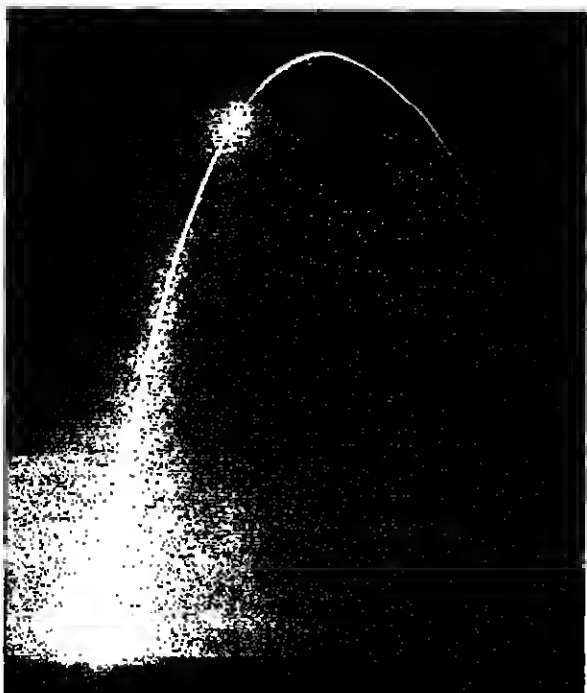
After Apollo 11, whatever happened to the Moonrush? Why don't we have a full-time base on our satellite? And why could the Lunar Prospector spacecraft make a crucial difference? Charles Arthur, Science Editor, explains why space buffs are getting excited about the prospect of finding a bit of water.

Lunar Prospector, which took off for the Moon early on Wednesday, may not be big: it's only 1.2 metres (4 feet) long and weighs just 295 kilograms (650 pounds). But it could really have a large impact. It could make the Moon the best thing since the Klondike Gold Rush.

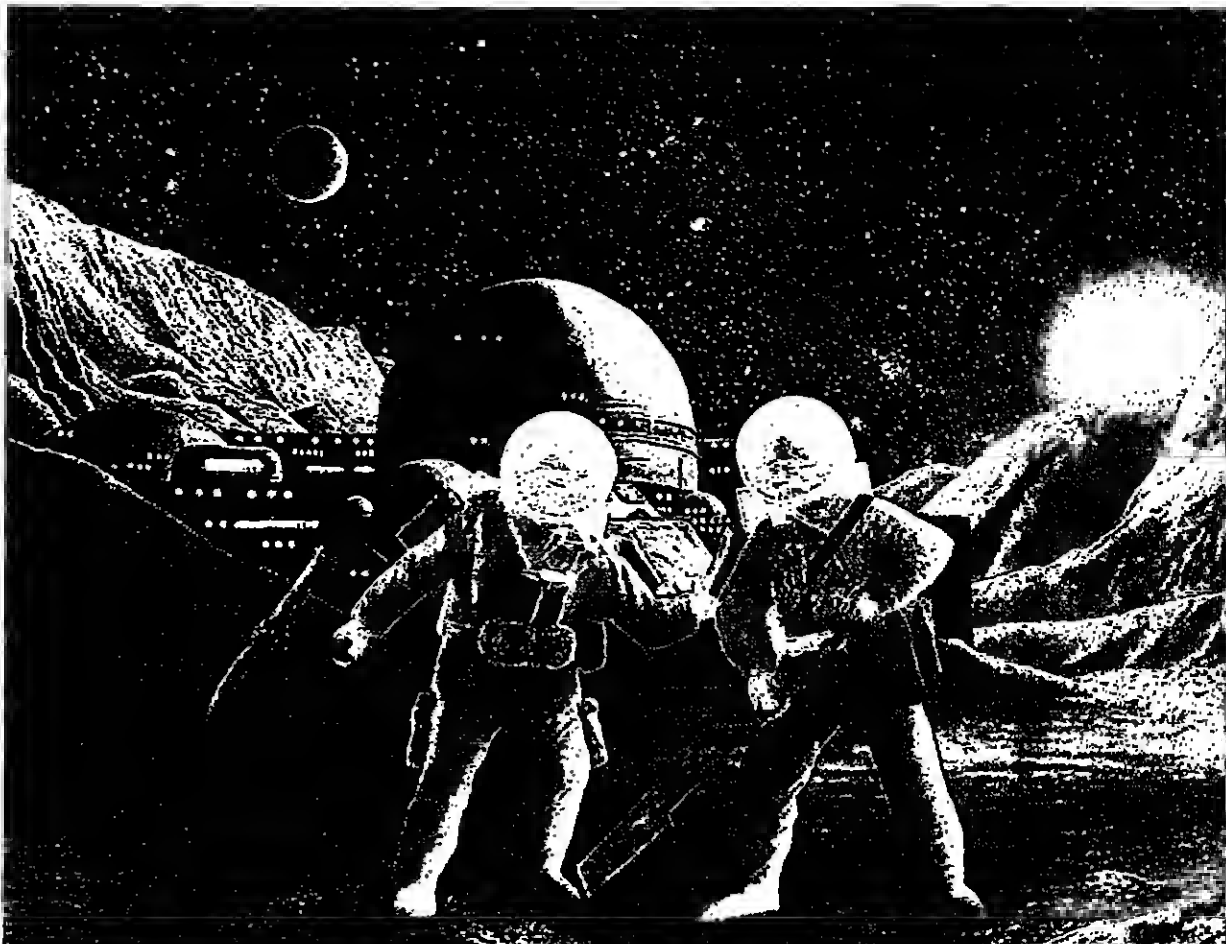
Watching the spacecraft take off, Joseph Boyce, a scientist who worked on NASA's Apollo moon missions, including the last one, in December 1972, was ecstatic. "After 25 years of having not been to the Moon by NASA, it certainly feels good to be going back," Mr Boyce said. "I couldn't be more excited, more happy, more pleased."

Prospector is due to arrive at the Moon on Sunday, after a trip covering 340,000 miles (384,000 kilometres). Two days later, the probe will slip into orbit 60 miles (96 kilometres) above the surface and begin its year-long search for evidence of frozen water, as well as minerals and gases.

If you are over 35, then the excitement generated by the Moonshots 30 years ago meant you expected that by now we would be



An Athena rocket carrying the Lunar Prospector probe is launched from the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on Tuesday (left); but an artist's impression (right) from 30 years ago gives an idea of the ambitions scientists had for lunar habitation in 1998



Photograph: Karl Renstrom/Reuters; Illustration: Julian Baum/Science Photo Library

all over the Moon - taking holidays there, using it as a waystation to head for Mars or the stars, and digging it up (as in 2001: A Space Odyssey) to discover mysterious signs from extraterrestrial races.

Instead, it's a junkyard for equipment and items left behind by the 12 astronauts who walked on the Moon: landers, huggies, even golf balls. What happened to those dreams?

Although everyone was thrilled by the images of Neil Armstrong bouncing down the ladder from the Eagle lander, the news that the Apollo 11 mission brought back in July 1969 was of a place without water and

without life. The lack of water makes living on the Moon impracticable, because would-be settlers would have to take all their oxygen and liquid requirements along in the launch vehicle. Water, in particular, is so heavy that getting it out of orbit is hugely expensive.

A Moon base would require about two metric tonnes of air and water per person per year.

Sending that to the Moon would cost roughly \$2,500 per kilogram, according to a 1994 study: keeping each person alive would cost roughly \$20 million per year. Though in 1989 President George Bush suggested

setting up a full-time lunar station, the end of the Cold War three years later killed off the finances required for the idea.

But those equations all change if there is water already on the Moon: the cost of setting up the station and running it would be cut at least tenfold. And some scientists believe the moon's shadowy poles hold as much as 1 billion tons of water ice, a theory bolstered by the military's Clementine spacecraft, launched to the Moon in 1994.

With water, lunar settlers would be able to drink and breathe without having to bring their own sup-

plies. The ice could be melted, and oxygen could be extracted from it, by electrolysis, using electricity generated from solar panels.

But why should we want a Moon base? Because it is a terrific spot for launching missions to other planets, or even the stars. Launching something from the Moon takes comparatively little energy, since its gravity is just one-sixth that of Earth.

The raw materials could be found there - the rocks contain plentiful iron, magnesium and titanium, as well as uranium, calcium and aluminium - and the water, electrolysed into hydrogen and oxygen, could

power a rocket. Neil Armstrong reckons that a lunar base would have a lot going for it.

"I'm certain that we'll have such bases in our lifetimes," he said on returning. "Somewhat like the Antarctic stations. There's certainly the problem of the environment and the vacuum, and the high temperature of day and night."

"Still, in some ways it's more hospitable than the Antarctic. There are no storms, no snow, no high winds, no unpredictable weather. As for the gravity - well, the Moon's a very pleasant kind of place to work in. Better than the Earth, I think."

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Conservatives demanded a recount of Welsh referendum votes and a full inquiry last night amid fresh evidence that the knife-edge count was mishandled. Fran Abrams, Political Correspondent, investigates a growing chorus of complaints.

Counting officers were told to ignore the votes of people who wrote "No" next to the box which said: "I agree that there should be a Welsh assembly." It emerged last night.

But a senior electoral officer said she was told to count the votes of people who put "Yes" next to a second box on the ballot paper which said: "I do not agree that there should be a Welsh assembly."

Alison Childs, the principal electoral officer for Rhondda Cynon Taff council, said she believed her counterparts around Wales had rung the office of Professor Eric Sunderland, the Chief Counting Officer, for clarification and had been given the same guidance.

Written rules sent out in advance gave different advice. They said if voters' intentions were clear their papers should be counted.

Ms Childs said electoral officers had complained to the Welsh Office in advance of the vote that the two-question ballot paper would cause confusion. In the event, there were

"We said there was obviously a huge problem. We told them that in advance because of the wording of the ballot paper. I believe every count had a similar problem and every count

phoned them," she said. She also said hordes of votes had been counted behind a curtain in her area because of strong guidance that no-one should see how the voting was going locally until the national result was known.

Last night a Welsh Office spokesman said its officials did not recollect giving any verbal guidance. The "no" camp were not satisfied, though.

The Conservatives' constitutional spokesman, Nigel Evans, said there should be an inquiry, possibly by the Welsh Select Committee of the House of Commons.

"This is an amazing inconsistency," he said. "If there have been massive irregularities that is appalling and of course it doesn't bode well for democracy."

Matthew Gunther-Bushell, strategist for the "Just say No" campaign in Wales, said there had been considerable confusion among both voters and electoral officers.

"I was astonished at the time, considering how slim the 'yes' majority was, that the Government refused a recount which is normal in Parliamentary elections.

"It is too early to be talking about vote-rigging but this new evidence about the counting guidelines, added to the widespread concern over counting irregularities, makes the case for a recount overwhelming," he said.

Although people who wrote "yes" in the "no" box had their votes counted as "no," those who wrote "no" in the "yes" box had their papers spoiled. There is no clear evidence that this swayed the vote either way, but some activists believe it may have done so.

Court officials are to be given a new role in briefing the me-

Although the Government dismisses suggestions that it is appointing outside "press officers", the move is designed to counter the public perception of judges and magistrates being out of touch with society.

In six pilot schemes at crown courts, to be launched later this year, senior court officials, probably court managers, will be earmarked as main "points of contact" to help with media inquiries.

Their role will be to provide explanation on judges' decisions – for example sentencing on rape cases – which may cause controversy. If the idea is approved by the Judges Council it could be extended to crown courts around the country.

Computer hug arrives early

The Millennium computer bug arrived two years early in a furniture store – prompting calls for industry to learn from the incident and take the issue more seriously.

A customer at a branch of Ikea who tried to pay for goods using a credit card with a 00 expiry date found that the machine used to read the card could not cope. NatWest, supplier of the machine, said the incident was not serious because it was one of fewer than 100 out of 170,000 terminals nationwide which would suffer the problem. Keying in the card data, rather

Don Cruickshank, of Action 2000, the Government-backed group set up to encourage businesses to tackle the problem, said: "This is exactly why we are pressing everyone to get to grips ... as soon as possible ... Everything must be checked."

Charlie Kray has lost the first round of his appeal against a conviction for masterminding a £39m cocaine deal.

The Court of Appeal rejected a written application from 71-year-old Kray's legal team for leave to appeal against the conviction. Kray's solicitor, Ralph Haecms, said: "We are disappointed we did not get leave to appeal, but will now prepare a legal submission to be heard before three judges."

Kray, the elder brother of gangster twins Ronnie and Reggie, was jailed for 12 years last June after being found guilty at Woolwich Crown Court of offering to supply undercover police officers with cocaine.

Four people died and six others were injured yesterday in two multiple pile-ups which brought chaos to busy stretches of the M6 motorway.

Three of the deaths came when three lorries and two cars were involved in a collision between junctions nine and 10 near Wednesbury, West Midlands, at about 6.15am. The fourth victim died in a pile-up shortly afterwards near Garstang, Lancashire. The crashes caused tailbacks of up to 40 miles.

The ceremony is the highlight of the British music industry year, but in an interview with Radio 1's *The Net* last night, guitarist Ed O'Brien dismissed it a ploy to sustain record sales at a quiet time of year.



Around 4,000 people a year could find themselves facing fixed penalty fines of £250 for non-payment of the £5.65 prescription charge under a crackdown announced by Alan Milburn, the health minister, on prescription fraud.

Officials at the Department of Health said yesterday that most of the fraud which costs the NHS around £100m a year – was caused by people falsely claiming they were qualified for free medicines because they were poor and receiving income support, or other welfare benefits.

Ministers found the system was "shot full of holes" and depended almost entirely on the honesty of patients, doctors and pharmacists. An efficiency scrutiny unit found blatant breaches, including one case of a man who ticked the box to obtain a free prescription on the ground that he was pregnant. In future, those claiming to be poor will have to show evidence such as a benefit certificate. If they still claim they are entitled to free prescriptions, but fail to provide evidence, they will still get their prescriptions free, but their forms will be marked for a possible check-up later.

The Prescription Pricing Authority fraud investigation unit will cross-check the unsubstantiated claims with benefit payments on the social security computer files. Those found to be claiming fraudulently will receive a penalty payment demand. Persistent offenders could be taken to court.

— Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

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PRICE CHECK

Controversy as C4 provides platform for paedophiles

A controversial Channel 4 documentary will interview named paedophiles about their desires and beliefs. Critics say it is giving a dangerous platform for child molesters to legitimise their values. Glenda Cooper, Social Affairs Correspondent, asks whether such a programme should be shown.

"We have got to work towards a society which casts out discrimination, prejudice and bigotry." This is Paul. He is talking about the need for society to stop discriminating against paedophiles. He also says he would love to come out and have an open relationship with a child where they did "the same things as heterosexuals do with each other".

He is one of five paedophiles interviewed for *The Devil Amongst Us*. There is also Gil, 75, who has kept his paedophilic

tendencies secret from his wife and children, Rob who communicates with other "boy lovers" via the Internet, Colin, convicted of possessing indecent material after filming young boys, and Peter Hamilton Harvey, who was convicted of indecent assault. All have one chilling thing in common: not one will admit any wrong in their desire for children.

"I don't feel I ever have been a danger to children," says Gil, who claims never to have acted on his desires. "I have been tempted but the very idea of doing something that would traumatise a child physically or psychologically, that's complete anathema to me."

"I could never hurt a child in any way. I would like a loving relationship between myself and a child as near to adult relationship as reasonably possible."

Those who work with sex offenders and their victims say that the documentary gives a "platform for criminals" who are allowed to put forward their views unchallenged. Views such as those of Colin who still cannot "see what all the fuss was

about" over his film which showed three 12-year-old boys urinating, defecating and simulating masturbation. "My role as an adult was to supervise and protect them from paedophiles."

Mike Taylor, of the NSPCC, said of the programme: "It is a chilling account of how men who have no moral scruples and who do not share the values of our society operate in sexually abusing children."

But Dea Birkett, the writer and journalist who presents the film says she made it because she feels that we need to know more about such people in order to deal with them. "I felt we actually needed to confront them, to look at them - what they think, what they do - basically to unhood them. There have always been victims but we need to know more about them so there are no more victims."

But Mr Taylor responded: "Who is speaking out for the children in all this? It is very unfortunate that the film does not take the child's perspective into account as well as that of the perpetrator of the abuse."

Paul Cavadino, principal officer for the National Association

for the Care and Resettlement and Offenders, added that the programme was "giving a platform to criminals to justify their activities that cause life-long damage to children". And he went on: "It's an unbalanced programme - there is no reference to the victims or survivors of paedophiles."

The programme makers argue that they show equally strongly people who have taken action against paedophiles such as Tony Shepherd, who tells of his attempts to get Mr Hamilton Harvey to leave the neighbourhood, including throwing a brick into the car of his 71-year-old father and setting fire to a car that belonged to a friend of the family.

Those actions got him put on probation otherwise Mr Shepherd says, he planned to "take [Hamilton Harvey] away to the area of Wareham forest ... He was going to be taught a lesson, going to be given a very serious warning he was not wanted any more and that it was in his best interests to move [We were going to] nail him to a tree."

"We must meet and confront paedophiles," says Ms Birkett who describes making the documentary as confronting her own worst fears. "We must learn how to deal with them without resorting to the bricks and the petrol bombs so we can protect children without violence or fear."

Ray Wyre, a therapist who has worked for many years with sex offenders, said: "There is a responsibility on us. This programme may reinforce their beliefs. These people believe what they do is not wrong, they believe society is wrong. Other people watching could have their belief system reinforced."

Asked last night to comment, Peter Grimdsdale, commissioning editor for religion at Channel 4 said: "At the very least the programme informs the debate by acknowledging, unpalatable as the truth might be, that paedophiles do exist and they live amongst us."



Dea Birkett: 'I felt we actually needed to confront them ... basically to unhood them'

Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

Council condemned in child abuse inquiry

Incompetence not corruption allowed a social worker to put children at risk of abuse for more than a decade. An independent inquiry said a 'climate of fear' allowed Mark Trotter, who died of an Aids-related illness, to carry on working with children in care. Glenda Cooper, Social Affairs Correspondent reports.

Hackney Council knew of four complaints of sexual abuse against Mark Trotter by the late Eighties but failed to suspend him because of his powerful position as a trade unionist.

But John Barratt, who carried out the independent inquiry into the Mark Trotter affair, said that the way the

matter was dealt with amounted to "impropriety" rather than corruption. "I criticised the failure to suspend [Trotter], not because of ... influence by councillors but by the fact that he had quite an influential position in the trade union in a council where trade unions have a lot of power," Mr Barratt said.

Trotter, who had worked for Hackney Council since 1981, was about to be arrested over allegations of sexual abuse when he died of an Aids-related illness in 1995. Four complaints of sexual abuse of children in Hackney and Liverpool had been made against him over the years.

The independent inquiry was set up by the council in 1996 after serious concerns about the activities and management of Trotter, who worked for the authority from 1981 to 1993. Newspaper revelations about the scandal brought the authority under attack for its handling of the affair and allegations of a cover-up.

It was claimed that Trotter, who was openly gay, had strong links with the then-ruling Labour group and stayed in his job despite being suspected of child abuse.

A separate investigation by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, also commissioned by Hackney Council, concluded last year that Trotter had abused at least six children and teenagers in his care.

Mr Barratt, a former director of Cambridgeshire social services, said that there was no evidence of a cover-up. "My conclusion is that inadequacies in dealing with the Trotter affair are best explained by reference to overall organisational incompetence rather than to corrupt political conspiracies."

But he was "highly critical" of the way Hackney conducted

its internal inquiry and said that there was a "poor quality" workforce. "mismanagement" and "uncontrolled power exercised ... in the managerial chaos of the 1980s".

The atmosphere at Hackney, where defamatory rumour was used as a "standard political weapon" and was combined with organisational incompetence meant that it was not difficult for people to believe in favouritism and undue influence.

The report calls on the council to review its childcare policy, including improving record-keeping for children, which it describes as appalling. It also recommends a multi-agency approach to looking after those in care.

Mr Barratt called for national guidelines to help prevent child abuse rather than leaving it to individual police forces and social services. "The Government should be looking

at the results of a number of inquiries. Is it right to be leaving it to some *ad hoc* inquiries? ... There is a possibility, almost more a probability, that widespread abuse did occur in residential care in the 1980s which may need looking at more thoroughly with common standards of co-operation rather than leaving it to individual police forces and individual social services."

John McCafferty, Labour group leader on Hackney Council, where no party has overall control, said: "I am pleased the independent report has concluded there was no cover-up. Hackney Labour was wrongly accused. This accusation has been completely rebutted by this independent inquiry."

But the Liberal Democrats said that while the report was good in places questions must be answered by the Labour Party about its handling of the affair.

The story finally hit the media. The warfare within the Labour group at Hackney meant that it was perceived as a cover-up because Trotter had been a Labour party activist. And a delay in setting up an investigation split Hackney's ruling Labour group with 17 members walking out amid claims of the cover-up. The Liberal Democrats requisitioned a special council meeting which finally voted at last to set up an independent inquiry.

When Mark Trotter was first interviewed in September 1981 as a houseparent for a children's home in Hackney the panel which appointed him were impressed and described him as a "pleasant young man who appeared quite determined".

But only three months later a young man in Trowbridge House alleged Trotter had "interfered" with him. A month later there was an allegation of indecent assault made by another boy. Trotter was suspended but after a full disciplinary hearing in June 1982 when the case was "not proven" he was returned to duty at Trowbridge House.

Two years later in 1984 Hackney heard that Merseyside Police and Liverpool Social Services - where Trotter had worked previously - were investigating another incident. In 1987 there was yet another allegation from a young woman in Hackney. The police were informed and investigated. The allegation could not be substantiated.

Little happened then until 1993 when Trotter retired on health grounds, dying in July 1995 aged 34 of an Aids-related illness. Merseyside police had been just about to question him about sexual abuse of five young men in Liverpool.

When Hackney social services were told of this they commissioned a social worker to trace as many young people as possible with whom Trotter had worked. He was meant to report by December. That deadline was missed. The second was also missed and the report - a mere seven pages - was not received until the following July. A year since the council were first alerted, only a fraction of the children had been traced, four of whom had died, one from an Aids-related illness.

Glenda Cooper

Mark Trotter: Died in 1995 from Aids-related illness



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Car dealers exposed in price-fixing investigation

Ever had a problem getting a car dealer to drop the price of new cars? The Consumers' Association has and it claims that some ruthless carmakers keep prices high. Randeep Ramesh, Transport Correspondent, examines the allegations.

Volvo, the Scandinavian motor manufacturer, was accused yesterday of "price-fixing" under European law by discouraging dealers from offering customers discounts.

An undercover researcher from *Which?* magazine posed as an interested buyer at 12 Volvo dealerships but could only get a "very small" discount on a car worth £16,675.

In fact some dealers allegedly went further telling the researcher that Volvo told them not to offer discounts. According to this month's *Which?* report, one Volvo dealer in Farnham allegedly told the researcher that the car maker would "rap the knuckles" of dealers caught discounting and another in Croydon said it would lose its franchise.

Any attempt to fix prices would breach European competition law. The Consumers' Association say it will present the evidence to the European Commission. Volvo deny the



Cutting up rough: An undercover researcher was told that Volvo instructed dealerships not to offer discounts in a move which flouts EU competition law

an Opel (Vauxhall) dealership in Holland for a right-hand drive Corsa. Two salesmen said Opel "would not allow them to sell cars to foreigners".

The report claims that when the researcher tried to order an import version of a Nissan Almera from the Continent - saving £4,000 on a car worth £11,000 - the investigator was told it was impossible to order.

According to the Commission last year, Britain joined the ranks of the most expensive places in which to buy a car. The Commission says this is due to price hikes by manufacturers and the rise in sterling's value.

Fifteen of the 75 models considered were most expensive in the UK including the Opel Corsa and Astra, and the Peugeot 106 and 306. Britain was cheapest for only three models: the BMW 730i and Volvo's 850 and 960.

Buyers will find no bargains in Germany or France which had the highest prices in the EU. Both had 30 of the dearest models. By contrast, the Netherlands and Portugal are the cheapest countries for cars.

claims. A spokeswoman for Volvo said that dealers have a margin of 7 per cent to "play with".

In a statement, the company said it "does not restrict in any way the price at which dealers may sell cars... it is incorrect to suggest that we have the ability

to either terminate a dealer's agreement or penalise them in any way for discounting".

The report also highlights that all 12 Fiat dealers inside the M25 are owned by the same company and offer the same models at the same prices - which, according to the Con-

sumers' Association, would "discourage competition".

Not all the companies contacted refused to give discounts. All four Ford dealers *Which?* visited offered "substantial discounts of up to £1,000".

However, the industry said motor manufacturers did not

have the power to fix the price of cars. "There are guideline prices but there are other considerations which dictate a retail price," said Christopher Macgowan, chief executive of the Retail Motor Industry Federation, the body which represents the country's 4,800

franchised dealerships.

Mr Macgowan added that when cars were in short supply very often customers would find themselves with no discount or even paying a premium. "For example there are some shortages of popular Audi and VW cars and people cannot ex-

pect to haggle and get savings."

Which? also questioned whether it was possible to import a car into Britain and claimed manufacturers were deliberately putting obstacles in the way of customers prepared to go abroad for a bargain.

When the researcher asked

More drivers ignoring drink limit

Nearly 10 per cent of motorists involved in an accident during Christmas were over the drink-drive limit, it was revealed yesterday.

Overall, police in England and Wales gave 15,455 tests after collisions and 1,430 were positive. Nearly 7,000 people were injured in car crashes from 18 December to 2 January. In two police force areas, one out of five drivers breath-tested after car crashes was found to have drunk too much.

Police said comparisons with previous drink-drive figures were impossible because a new system of counting has been introduced this year. Previously details of all breath-tests during the festive period were given, whether or not the drivers stopped were involved in accidents.

Despite the police's attempts to restrict information, the breath-test failure rate of 9 per cent over Christmas is far higher than the 5 per cent rate in in-

jury collisions reported by the Government for the year of 1996.

Avon and Somerset police found that 30 (21 per cent) of the 145 motorists tested had drunk too much. In Wiltshire, 27 out of 138 breath tests (20 per cent) were positive.

North Wales had the third highest rate at 17 per cent and Lancashire was fourth with 16 per cent.

Dave Rogers, of the Royal Society for the Prevention of

Accidents said the failure rate was appalling. "Far too many people are still drinking and driving without any thought for the devastation they can cause."

"We fear that drink-driving is slowly on the increase again. We would like to see police and the courts getting tough with drink drivers so that these totally irresponsible motorists realise that the risk is just not worth taking."

— Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

Prescott pledges action on cleaner air

Air pollution will be the Government's main target in its bid to clean up the environment during the UK's presidency of the European Union.

John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, pledged to help make Europe "greener" with action on climate change, reductions in acid rain, new policies to reduce filthy exhaust fumes from vans and heavy lorries, and more protection for threatened animals, birds and plant life.

Mr Prescott said traffic pol-

lution must be curbed in order to meet the ambitious carbon dioxide reduction levels the Government has set itself. However, he dismissed reports that this would add another £300 to the cost of a car.

Gavin Strang, the minister responsible for transport, said there was no question that the Government wanted better technology and for consumers to be more conscious of green issues when they bought cars.

The airline industry will also

come under pressure from regulators who are concerned with the health of people living near airports caused by harmful NOx gases spewed from aircraft engines.

Mr Prescott told reporters at a London news conference: "The presidency is not something remote, happening in Europe. It's about the lives we lead, our jobs, tackling crime and improving the environment."

There was no secret, said Mr Prescott, about the "consider-

able public concern" in Britain and across Europe about poor air quality - but, he added, only Europe-wide measures could make any difference to improving the air we all breathe.

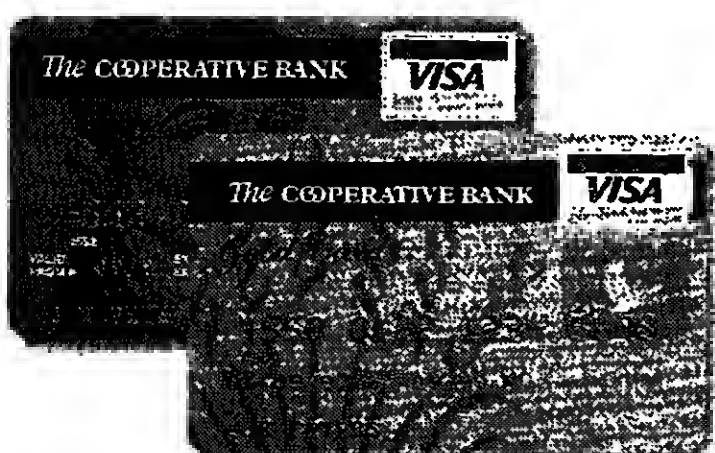
Although the proposals were generally welcomed, some campaigners said more could be done. Lynn Sloman, Assistant Director of Transport 2000, said: "They have said nothing about cutting the mammoth EU funded road-building programme."

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Psychopathic drifter convicted of nightmare attack

A homeless teenager who plunged a knife into the head of a woman travelling alone on a train was convicted yesterday of attempted murder.

Jon Bennett, Crime Correspondent reports on a shocking case of random violence.

Robert Buckland, 18, was remanded for psychiatric reports until next month, when he will be sentenced. His victim, Alison Kennedy, 28, miraculously survived the attack in which the five-inch-bladed Bowie-style hunting knife had to be removed from her head.

Buckland said he had wanted to snatch Miss Kennedy's handbag but had thrust the knife into her skull in a rush of anger, intending to kill her. When she turned and rose from her seat, holding the knife in her head, Buckland ran away scared and tried to jump from the train.

The Old Bailey was told he suffered from a severe psychopathic disorder from early childhood which exploded into



Robert Buckland (left) told the court he had carried out the attack in a moment of anger. Doctors said Alison Kennedy (right) was lucky to be alive after the knife was plunged into her skull, seen in an X-ray (centre)



Speaking outside the court after the verdict, she said: "I feel a great sense of relief at the result and a great sense of satisfaction to be here to see it for myself."

"I would like to say thanks to everyone who helped me and I am looking forward to getting on with my life."

Surgeons originally thought Miss Kennedy would die from the massive knife wound. She still needs an operation to repair bone deficiency and has suffered extensively from deep psychological trauma.

Dr Adrian Casey, the surgeon responsible for removing the knife from Miss Kennedy's head, said: "To survive relatively intact from an injury of this kind is nothing short of a miracle."

"When she came to us she was lying on a trolley with a knife coming out of her head. The amazing thing was she was awake and alert despite this horrific injury."

"We put her to sleep under general anaesthetic and then in theatre we opened up the wound where the knife had shattered the skull and we drilled with a high-speed drill around the knife so we had full access to the brain and then I cautiously removed the knife."

violence on occasions. At school, he had fantasised about stabbing a woman in the head. Buckland had admitted wounding Miss Kennedy, who was travelling to visit her sister on the Waterloo to Guildford train in March last year. But he denied attempted murder.

He had left home at 16 after trouble with his stepmother but by March last year he was fed up sleeping rough and begging. He was on his way to Guildford to find a bed for the night. Miss Kennedy was on the same train visiting her sister. Among the few possessions

Buckland had was the knife and a hammer he said his father had given him. He said he had them so he could break into premises to steal and feed himself.

He took out the hunting knife when he was three feet behind Miss Kennedy. He told the court: "I put my

hand on the grip exactly like you see in a horror movie. I took the knife out of my pocket and raised my arm up in the air."

"Then a big rush of anger. As I pulled my arm down, it all came out. I think all the stress and frustration had all been released in that blow. I had not planned to dispose of it in that way - that was just the way I was feeling," he said.

Afterwards he said he was shocked by what he had done. "She stood up. I did not know what she was going to do. To be quite honest, I was scared of her. I ran through the carriage. I saw her stand, one hand on her head, staggering down."

Miss Kennedy, a charity worker from Northern Ireland, said she thought she was going to die. She will never fully recover from the assault and is to have more surgery.

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Pressure on schools to reach new literacy levels

Ministers will put pressure on local education authorities to adopt traditional teaching methods if they fail to meet literacy targets. Judith Judd, Education Editor, describes government plans to achieve dramatic improvements in literacy by 2002.

90 per cent. Authorities were asked to choose targets from a 5 per cent range. Mr Byers said that some had been cajoled into setting targets acceptable to the Government. Others had opted to aim for even higher goals.

All have now agreed acceptable targets.

Mr Byers accepted that progress would be less rapid in areas which are already performing well. He said: "There will be no hiding place for under performance - every parent will know these figures and will judge local education authorities on how they meet them."

Ministers would be monitoring authorities' progress and would take action if any were falling behind.

Most people now accepted, he said, that teaching methods used in the national literacy project, which include phonics and whole-class teaching worked. "If an authority is falling behind... we will put pressure on them to adopt different methods which will raise literacy levels."

Mr Byers accepted that those authorities in deprived areas would need more help from the Government but said that poverty was no excuse for underachievement. He reassured conference delegates that they had a vital role to play in new education action zones but warned them that they had no God-given right to run schools.

Mr Byers also announced that the Government is to introduce a new kite-marking system for independent schools. The rethink has been prompted by the Utting report on child protection. Talks are taking place between ministers and independent school leaders.

Video link in violent chain

Violent videos do not make young people violent, it is violence that makes them enjoy watching violent videos, a Home Office Study has revealed.

As reported in *The Independent* last week, a study by Birmingham University commissioned in the aftermath of the Jamie Bulger case has found no simplistic pattern of behaviour where young men watch violent videos and then carry out aggressive or violent acts.

Instead the study suggests that the link between poor social background and delinquent behaviour extends to a taste for violent films. The report concluded: "The research points to a pathway from having a violent home background, to being an offender, to being more likely to prefer violent films and violent actors."

Airline in £1.2m suit over delay

Caledonian Airways faces a £1.2m legal action after a flight to Britain was delayed for 37 hours. Two solicitors who were on flight CK777 from Tel Aviv are threatening a multi-party action on behalf of around 300 of the 377 passengers.

The aircraft had been scheduled to arrive at 5am on Monday, but did not arrive until 6pm on Tuesday, following technical problems. The Tristar jet was first delayed more than 17 hours in Israel while engineers fixed a faulty instrument gauge, and was then forced to make an emergency landing in Greece two hours into the flight because of engine problems.

Caledonian Airways was named by *Which?* as the worst airline for delays last summer. A spokeswoman for the airline said last night they had not been notified of any legal action.

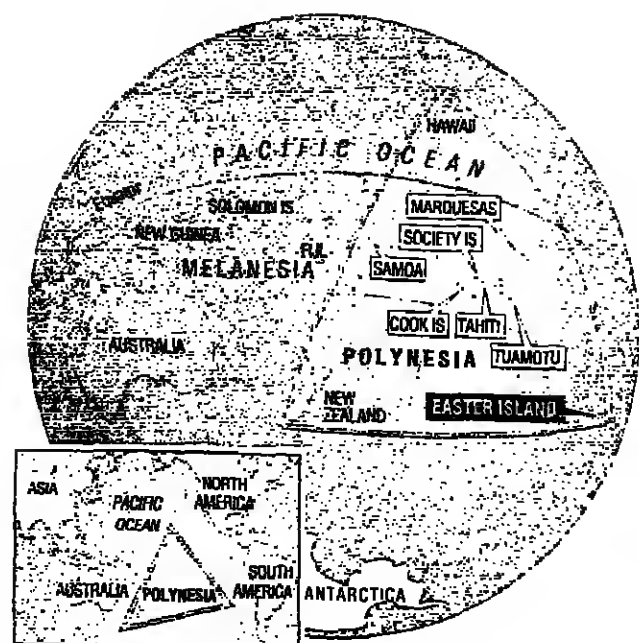
— Paul McCann

— Michael Streeter

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DNA shows how Thor Heyerdahl got it wrong

Fifty years ago, Thor Heyerdahl and the Kon-Tiki expedition appeared to prove that ancient humans could have sailed west from South America to colonise the Pacific islands. But DNA evidence now shows that his theory was wrong. Charles Arthur, Science Editor, on the molecules that have upset a great adventure.

In *The Voyage of the 'Kon-Tiki'*, the Norwegian archaeologist Thor Heyerdahl famously proved that early humans could have used the trade winds to sail from Peru to Easter Island - and thus be its first settlers. But although the tale of his replica raft and the voyage westward across the Pacific in August 1947 makes a stirring tale, his idea has now been proved to be wrong. Sorry, Thor: DNA analysis of the remains of the original settlers of islands all around the Pacific, including Easter Island, demonstrates that they actually came from South-East Asia.

Dr Erika Hagelberg, of the department of genetics at Cambridge University, has

spent the past eight years studying the mitochondrial DNA - passed down through the maternal line - of Polynesians, who moved into the western Pacific about 1,500 years ago, and the Melanesians, who were the first to migrate there during the Pleistocene era about 60,000 years ago.

"There are two groups of populations which moved into the area, but both ultimately came from Asia," Dr Hagelberg said yesterday. "The Melanesians could have been one of the first migrations of modern humans out of Africa." They appear to have reached New Guinea, where they settled. The Polynesians then followed, and

colonised New Zealand, Hawaii and Easter Island itself.

Determining the origins of populations by analysing mitochondrial DNA is done by first assuming that mutations in the sequence of the DNA arise at a specific rate but differently for different people. So two populations which evolve apart will have dissimilar sequences of mitochondrial DNA. That means you can distinguish where the DNA found in skeletons originated from, by comparing it with that from modern-day populations and also ancient DNA of known origins. And in the case of Easter Island's original settlers, it turns out

that their common ancestor comes from South-East Asia - not South America.

Professor Heyerdahl has counter-claimed that the real first settlers cremated their dead, which would destroy any potential evidence. But Dr Hagelberg disputes this. "I can look at the DNA in the bones. I've examined a couple of hundred skeletons. It just takes patience and attention to detail."

Her work was done in collaboration with teams in Oxford, Holland and Australia and presented yesterday at a seminar at the Natural History Museum, organised by the Natural Environment Research Council, looking at "ancient biomolecules".

Asteroids' tidal wave threat

The impact of a wayward asteroid on one of the earth's oceans would spell disaster for coastal cities, a US scientist says. Such an impact would trigger massive tidal waves, or "tsunamis" capable of travelling thousands of kilometres and devastating entire coastlines - though Britain, it seems, would be spared the worst effects.

Jack Hills, an astrophysicist at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, used a computer program to make the first detailed simulations of cosmic impacts on our planet's oceans. He presented the results yesterday at the winter meeting of the American Astronomical Society.

Even a comparatively small asteroid, with a diameter of 200m, would "cause a large-scale tsunami on all of the coastal areas on the particular ocean that it hits", Mr Hills said. Such an impact is expected every few thousand years. The resulting ocean waves would be some 30m in height, and would grow even larger as they approached the shore. They would also be unstoppable.

The worst-case scenario Mr Hills investigated was the impact of an object five kilometres across - an event expected once in about 10 million years. The simulation looked at a strike in the north of the Atlantic Ocean. The model predicted waves powerful enough to swamp the eastern seaboard of the United States right up to the Appalachian Mountains.

Though parts of Europe would also be devastated by such a mighty splash, a quirk of geography acts in Britain's favour: the ocean floor off south-west England has a very gradual slope. This shallow incline, Mr Hills explains, would reflect some of the tsunami's energy back into the ocean. "The damage in England is much smaller than one would think," he said.

Ireland would fare slightly worse, while France and Portugal would take the brunt of devastation on the eastern side of the Atlantic.

Mr Hills said the first step in dealing with the threat of cosmic collisions is a programme to identify the thousands of objects that could potentially hit our planet, along with better evacuation planning for coastal areas.

— Dan Falk, Washington

Dinosaurs got feathers to stay warm

In the world of dinosaurs, one argument is increasingly occupying scientists: did birds evolve from lizard-like dinosaurs, or from some other group of animals?

Now, two newly discovered specimens from China seem to show dinosaurs which developed primitive feathers for warmth rather than flight, and could be early ancestors of today's birds.

The well-preserved fossil skeletons of the

chicken-sized biped dinosaur *Sinosauropteryx*, which lived about 140 million years ago, were recently found in Liaoning in north-eastern China. The most interesting discovery was the quilt-like "integumentary structures" covering both specimens, the science journal *Nature* reports today. Running from the base of the head along the back and tail, they are thought to be the remains of feathers, or feather-like structures,

but were clearly not designed for flight. It is possible they were used to stop the dinosaur losing body heat, which would suggest they were warm-blooded, unlike lizards which are cold-blooded.

The argument over whether birds developed from dinosaurs has intensified in the past few years. The generally held view is that *Archaeopteryx*, a dinosaur with wing-like arms which lived about 150 million years

ago, was the precursor of modern birds. But that view has been challenged by a group of scientists who think they evolved in parallel from a common ancestor with dinosaurs. The evidence from *Sinosauropteryx* indicates that feathers evolved from simpler, branched structures that appeared in non-flying dinosaurs, possibly as a means of insulation.

— Charles Arthur

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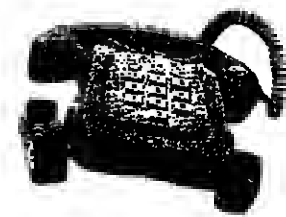


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Tories plan American style primary for London mayor



In the running: From left, MP and diarist Alan Clark, former transport minister Steven Norris, best-selling author Jeffrey Archer, and the last governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten

The official Tory candidate to become Mayor of London is to be selected by a one member one vote ballot of the Tory Party in the South East. Colin Brown, Chief Political Correspondent, says Lord Archer is miles ahead in the popularity stakes.

Best selling author Jeffrey Archer's chances of becoming the Tory candidate for the mayor of London were enhanced last night by

the confirmation by Conservative Party leaders that a ballot of the party will be held before the names go into the hat.

Lord Archer, who claimed an athletics "blue" at university, has been out of the blocks in front of the rest of the field for months. He has even visited New York in his efforts to prepare himself for assuming the role of the first US-style Mayor of London.

But in spite of his enthusiasm for the job, Lord Archer is not being given a clear field. Other runners limbering up for the "primaries" in London could include Chris

Patten, the last Governor of Hong Kong, Steven Norris, the colourful former transport minister for the capital, and Alan Clark, Chelsea M. diarist, wit, and rank outsider.

The Tory leadership may have their reservations about a Tory beauty parade of such high-profile candidates - they are scarcely shrinking violets, and may relish an unseemly scrap.

There had been clear signals that the Tory hierarchy was reluctant to see Lord Archer become the official candidate because of his high profile and occasionally

maverick attitudes. One senior Tory source said some weeks ago: "Jeffrey has peaked too soon."

But the one-member, one-vote contest means grassroots activists can determine the outcome - and they are some activists who so often applaud Lord Archer to the rafters after his bullish speeches to party conference, and buy his books.

Conservative Central Office and the leadership will stand aside, not even insisting upon nominations before would-be mayors throw their hats in the ring.

Anyone who wishes to stand need only

be a party member to put his or her name forward. The ballot is likely to be restricted to members in the London area, where Lord Archer has a flat overlooking the Houses of Parliament.

In addition to having his own fortune to back his campaign, Lord Archer has been starring in an advertisement on television for BT, which has led to some grumbles about unfair competition.

Mr Patten was seen as the preferred candidate for the Tory leadership, having gravitas and celebrity quality after leaving Hong Kong. It is not thought his decision

to sign the pro-European letter to *The Independent* has damaged his long-term chances, following the signal yesterday by William Hague that he still wants him in his team and will tell him so next time they meet in a couple of weeks.

Mr Patten, who has recently bought a house in West London, is telling friends that he is interested in the vacancy, if it is a "real job".

The London referendum, to see whether people want an elected mayor and a separate London authority, takes place on May 7.

Redwood bound for Zog, says Labour

John Redwood lambasted Tony Blair for leaving Britain for Tokyo today after launching Britain's European presidency in London. Colin Brown says Labour accused Mr Redwood of 'heading for Planet Zog'.

Arch Euro-sceptic John Redwood was attacked by Labour last night of "spinning out of control" after accusing Tony Blair of turning his back on Britain's role in Europe for planning to fly to Japan for a summit today after launching Britain's presidency of the union. "John Redwood is so out of touch, he is now spinning out of control on his return to Planet Zog," said a senior Labour party source.

Mr Blair will today be boarding an aircraft for Japan after launching Britain's presidency of the European Union in London with Jacques Santer, the EU President. He will be taking a leading role in an EU-Japan summit in Tokyo with Mr Santer, but his decision to fly out of Britain so soon after his new year break in the Seychelles was attacked by arch Euro-sceptic John Redwood.

"When the Prime Minister decides to launch his presidency from the Seychelles and re-

turns to Britain briefly before going off to Japan, he is sending a message to our European partners he wishes to turn his back on them," Mr Redwood said.

Mr Redwood said that Mr Blair and the Cabinet had failed to prepare for the six-month presidency. He said they should have spent more time preparing Britain's agenda to keep EU taxes low, markets flexible and protect small firms from red tape.

Denying that he was being trivial, Mr Redwood said he wanted Britain to use its presidency to police the legality of countries planning to go ahead with a single currency in 1999 without meeting the requirements in the Maastricht treaty.

He also gave his strong backing to the stand by the Conservative leader, William Hague, against a single currency. Meanwhile, senior Tory sources said Chris Patten could still return to Mr Hague's team, in spite of signing the letter to *The Independent* challenging his leadership on the single currency.

"Chris knows that in politics nothing matters. People have short memories," said a former minister, Mr Hague yesterday made it clear he would be seeing Mr Patten in the next few weeks to invite him back, providing he toes the Shadow Cabinet line ruling out a single

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Feast
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Vintage sessions by
bands including Pink
Floyd and the Who are
being unearthed by the
BBC following the
interest in the Rolling
Stones tapes. *David Lester*
Arch News Editor, visits
the archives and listens
to the music.

IBC's ch
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DAILY P
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Feast from the dark side of Pink Floyd

Vintage sessions by bands including Pink Floyd and the Who are being unearthed by the BBC following the interest in the Rolling Stones tapes. David Lister, Arts News Editor, visits the archives and listens to the music.

For any rock music fan the basements containing the BBC radio archives are a treasure. Shelf upon shelf of tapes contain vintage performances from the last 30 years.

Not before time, the BBC are drawing up plans to release some of these sessions, both concert and studio performances, by the world's most famous groups.

This follows the success of *The Beatles: Live at the BBC*, which made the corporation £2m. *The Led Zeppelin BBC Sessions* which has sold 1 million copies and aroused huge interest in the United States, and the compiling of Sixties sessions by the Rolling Stones, exclusively reviewed yesterday in *The Independent*.

Those sessions are likely to be released this year. But with the BBC realising that the archive recordings, all of studio quality, can attract massive sales, the Stones are almost certain to be followed by other big names.

John Willan, head of music at BBC Worldwide, who is overseeing the project, said: "Gradually the record companies and artists are discovering that there is a certain cachet about BBC sessions."

I visited the basement containing the BBC archives this week and saw shelf upon shelf

of tapes containing sessions from names such as Pink Floyd, the Who, Jimi Hendrix, Queen, Elton John, Genesis, Cream, and - presumably spelled by a BBC employee who was not a music fan - a group called the "Beetles".

I listened to Pink Floyd recordings from 1971 that sent a shiver down the spine: three completely different and mesmerising versions of their classic track "Echoes", and an alternative and richer version of their 1970 album *Atom Heart Mother*.

A compilation of Pink Floyd BBC sessions possibly holds the most exciting potential. The band was at its peak, just before the release of *Dark Side Of the Moon*, its highest selling album, and used the sessions for a feast of improvisation.

These alternate takes and the chance to own hitherto unreleased tracks are factors that will encourage fans to buy BBC sessions by groups such as Pink Floyd. Another factor is the different perspective youthful performances offer on well established international acts.

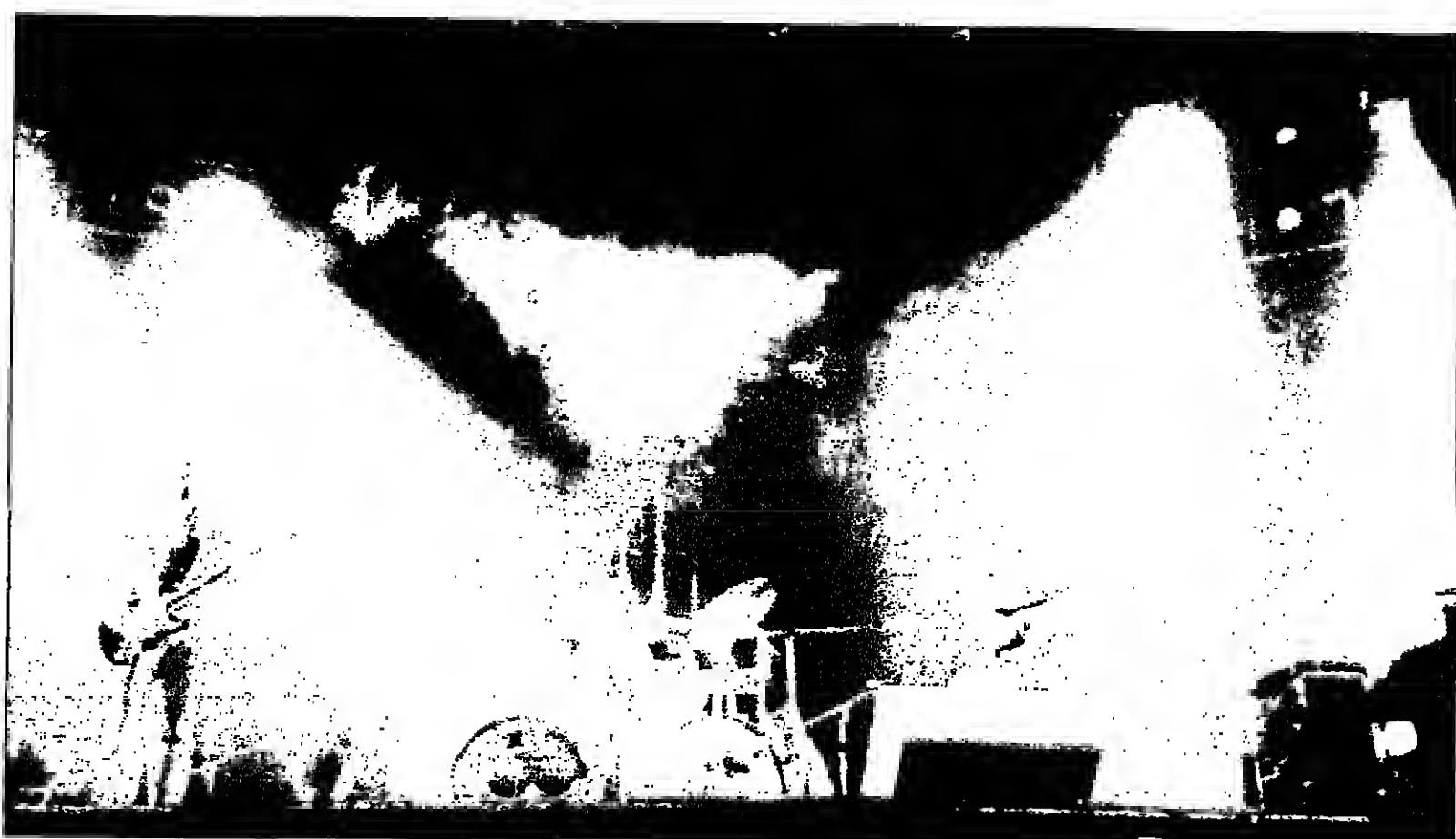
For example, I shall not easily forget hearing a 1964 session by the Rolling Stones this week, a soulful rendering of their still underrated tune "You'd Better Move On" with Keith Richards in the background crooning doo-wah-doo-wah into the microphone, surely the only time in his career he has so nearly risked losing all his street cred.

Occasionally, the BBC tapes offer endearing moments of the primitive in performance techniques. Bernie Andrews, the producer on *Saturday Club*, had to buy a builder's board so that he and the programme's host Brian Matthew could stamp on it as backing for the Dave Clark Five thumping out

their song "Bits And Pieces".

All that is stopping BBC Worldwide from reaping the rewards of the corporation's archives is the need to get agreement in from the relevant band and its record company. Some groups, such as Pink Floyd, are still active and may have plans to release new work. But it is unlikely that any potential objections would survive the hands listening again to the quality of the work that they will not have heard for two decades or more.

Leslie Golding, business development manager at BBC Worldwide Music, has been scouring the archives for both rock and classical sessions, as classical sessions are also being released. He describes some of the rock sessions as "astonishing" and almost all of recording studio quality.



Vintage sessions by Pink Floyd (above) and the Who have been unearthed in the BBC Archives

Photograph: London Features International

BBC's cheapest ever comedy

With jaw-dropping candour the producer of an experimental new BBC comedy series has admitted that the "potential for the show to be terrible is great."

He was talking about *Comedy Nation*, a weird programme shot on hand-held videos that is a cross between BBC 2's public access slot *Video Nation* and a traditional sketch show. If it is terrible it will be fortunate because it is likely to be the cheapest comedy show ever broadcast by the BBC.

Comedy Nation will air at midnight on Friday for half an hour for 13 weeks. It cost just £29,000 per episode to produce, compared with more than £200,000 per episode for shows like *The Fast Show*.

"In exchange for having no money the executives have said we can have carte blanche," says co-producer Phil Clarke. "We don't have to go upstairs and ask permission for anything. At that time of night we can be rude

if we want and we can get things on TV that wouldn't normally make it."

The writers and performers of the show come from all parts of the comedy world. The only criteria being they have to do something different and they have to work for the Equity minimum.

There will be 30 sketches per show crammed into the half hour with as many writers and performers contributing as possible. "People will look at them and wonder what the hell we are doing. Some of it is very odd," Mr Clarke said.

The idea behind the show is for the BBC to trawl the massive reservoir of comedy writing talent in Britain to see what new stars it can come up with. "There is every reason why it could be very good, given its budget," said Mr Clarke. "But the potential to be terrible is great. But unless it was this cheap we wouldn't get to do it."

— Paul McCann
Media Correspondent

DAILY POEM

Taken Awares

By Jamie McKendrick

I fall into every trap
they set for me -
mantrap, mousetrap, birdlime.

Every time
I take the bait -
the worm, the cheese, whatever.

I pluck the wire
that shifts the lever
that springs the teeth.

Then, in the calm before death,
I flutter myself
I'd seen it all a mile off.

I even manage a small laugh.

Our Daily Poems until Monday 19 January (when the winner will be announced) come from the 10 volumes shortlisted for the 1997 TS Eliot Prize, presented by the Poetry Book Society. All the authors will take part in a reading on Sunday 18 January at 7.30pm in the Almeida Theatre, London N1 (box office: 0171-359 4404). This poem comes from *The Marble Fly* (OUP, £6.99). © Jamie McKendrick.



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Khatami launches TV diplomacy with America

In a much-heralded broadcast on international television, the Iranian President, Mohammad Khatami, last night sought to end nearly two decades of hostility with the United States and move towards more normal relations. Mary Dejevsky reports on the background to the broadcast and the message it conveyed.



that had been seen as a counterweight. The confirmation of Iran's growing regional influence may have encouraged Mr Khatami to risk his olive branch to the US.

This two-part broadcast on the Cable News Network (CNN) was without precedent. The elected leader of one of the most conservative regimes in the world had decided to bypass conventional channels of diplomacy and use the 20th century medium of communications to appeal direct to the American public.

In a format that suggested long negotiations and elements of compromise, the Iranian President gave a short, unedited, address and then answered questions from CNN's senior international correspondent, Christiane Amanpour. That Mr Khatami agreed to be interviewed by a woman correspondent – albeit one with her hair devoutly covered – also sent a message, to America and Iran, that the hints of relative liberalism detected in his election programme (and believed to have brought him victory) was for real.

Yesterday's broadcast came three weeks after Mr Khatami had first intimated publicly at an opening towards the US. Speaking at the conference of Islamic countries in Tehran last month, he suggested a "thoughtful dialogue" between Iran and "the great people and nation of America".

That conference was something of a diplomatic coup for Iran: it attracted a big turnout of Islamic leaders, completely eclipsing a US-backed trade conference the previous week

If he had been hoping for a positive response from Washington, at least in public, he may have been disappointed. The State Department called for "deeds, not words" and said that Iran would be judged by its actions. Since then it has drawn attention to reports of sales of Russian missile technology to Iran. And yesterday, on the morning of Mr Khatami's broadcast, representatives of the Iranian opposition in exile in the US published what they said was new evidence about an Iranian missile programme.

Relations between Iran and the US have been hostile, varying from warlike to fractious, ever since the 1979 Islamic revolution which ousted the Shah and brought the ayatollahs to power. The 444-day siege of the US embassy, in which 52 US diplomats were held hostage, was a heroic chapter for Iran's revolution. For Washington, it was a national humiliation that arguably cost Jimmy Carter, the last Democrat president before Bill Clinton, a second term.

White House officials and advisers, whose views diverge about the prospects for imminent change in Iran and the strength of President Khatami's influence *vis-à-vis* the more conservative ayatollahs, are reported to have been locked in debate about how to proceed. Washington is concerned not to be trapped into boosting Iran's



Modern media: Mohammad Khatami used the CNN interview to hint at his liberalism

Photograph: Reuters

international prestige without gaining something in return.

The signals coming from Iran have also been mixed, with the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and other senior ayatollahs denying any desire for rapprochement with the US, and

newspaper reports of scant popular support for mending fences with the "Great Satan".

Washington has, nonetheless, compelling reasons to be interested in better relations with Iran. Moving away from outright hostility towards Tehran could give the US an-

other avenue for exerting pressure on Iraq and containing the Taliban leadership of Afghanistan.

Iran could be co-opted to play a positive role in supporting Bosnia's Muslims, so halting Serbian influence. Improved relations also offer

the US the chance of a gracious retreat from the Helms-Burton legislation as it applies to Iran. At present, third countries that trade with Iran are threatened with US sanctions, but the law has riled the Europeans, especially France, and has damaged US diplomacy.

FACTS AND FIGURES

The Islamic Republic of Iran:

Population: 56 million

Land area: 634,000 sq miles (UK: 95,000 sq miles)

Capital: Tehran

Population: 6 million

Per capita GDP: £1,050. In the UK: £10,500

Main exports: Oil. Iran produces 5.3 per cent of the world's oil. Also exports gas, petrochemicals, steel and copper

Main imports: Technological products, industrial equipment

Government: Supreme Leader is Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, a religious leader with wide powers of patronage, and legitimacy built in to the constitution. President Mohammed Khatami, elected 1997 is a "mild reformer".

Religion: 99 per cent Muslim. (93 per cent Shia, 6 per cent Sunni)

Official language: Farsi

Life expectancy: 65 male, 66 female

Literacy: 54 per cent

— Gidon Freeman

Caspian oil soothes troubled waters for West

Iran's gradual reopening to the world comes at a time when Tehran is increasingly on the minds of Western policy-makers.

Iran is assuming an increasingly central role in the Caspian region, and given its huge energy resources, that has big implications for America, Europe and Russia. New oil and gas links between the Caspian nations and Iran are beginning to take shape, despite United States opposition.

Neighbouring Turkmenistan recently opened a modest but important pipeline for transporting gas from the Turkmen Korpedshe field to the Iranian town of Kord Kuy. This signals a big shift in regional politics.

For the first time Moscow's former Central Asian colonies are bypassing Russia when exporting energy products, while America turns a blind eye. Washington has decided that an agreement to transport gas via Iran to Turkey does not violate a 1996 sanctions act, and it has become clear that the Caspian nations with their unlimited resources are not going to abandon the Iranian option.

Given the ethnic conflicts and complicated regional politics which dominate the Caspian region, Iran has naturally emerged as the most reliable country for pumping out the area's vast oil and gas resources.

One consequence of Iran's active role in the region will be the Central Asian republics' ability to pursue policies independent of Russia. At present Transneft and Gazprom, Russia's oil pipeline monopoly and gas monopoly respectively, have almost total control of the transportation of resources from the region.

It is impossible for the Central Asian republics to make serious profits as long as they are effectively dominated by Rus-

sia. Since last March, Turkmenistan has refused to transport gas to Russia, Ukraine and some other former Soviet republics because of a dispute over gas prices, accumulated debt and transit fees.

The three proposed routes for transportation of Caspian oil hacked by the West all avoid Iran. But they are by no means trouble free. All three pass through complicated Caucasian geography and territory which is dogged by ethnic disputes.

Of highest concern to oil executives is, however, the danger of sabotage. For although the region is relatively quiet at the moment, the countries' fragile democracies mean they cannot make any firm promises.

The US had hoped that, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Nato ally Turkey would play a major role in the Turkic countries of Central Asia. At the same time, Turkey dreamt of stretching a Turkic belt from the Adriatic to the Great Wall of China. However, both plans failed.

In contrast, Iran has played a steady game of pragmatic diplomacy: it has dropped its emphasis on Islamic fundamentalism and opted for more traditional Iranian foreign and trade policy; throughout the conflict between Shia Muslim Azeris and Christian Armenians Iran has maintained a strong relationship with Armenia and is smoothing its relationship with Azerbaijan by signing a trade and economic cooperation agreement; and it has adopted a neutral position between Islamist guerrillas and ex-communist rulers in Persia-speaking Tajikistan.

It has also signed agreements of mutual cooperation in economic, trade and other areas with most of the republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus.

— Goyane Afrikan

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Afrikan

Former South African president, P W Botha, is to be prosecuted for defying a subpoena to appear before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Mary Broad reports from Johannesburg

Zimbabwe land plan attacked

Britain's Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short, has criticised the Zimbabwean government's plan to nationalise land. She said the plan was "unfair and unjust" and would "set back the country's economic development". She also said that the plan would "disrupt the lives of many people" and "create a new class of landless peasants".

Netanyahu to decide

The US peace envoy, Dennis Ross, meets Israeli and Palestinian leaders this week. At issue is how much pressure he will put on Benjamin Netanyahu over Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank. Ross will also meet with Jerusalem reports on how American demands are threatening to tear Israel's ruling coalition apart.

Dean Rusk, the American Secretary of State, said that the US would not support any plan that would "set back the country's economic development". He also said that the US would not support any plan that would "disrupt the lives of many people" and "create a new class of landless peasants".

Military manoeuvres

British and American troops are conducting large-scale military manoeuvres in the Middle East. The manoeuvres are being conducted in response to the recent tensions in the region. The British Army is participating in the manoeuvres with the US Army. The manoeuvres are expected to last for several weeks.

Afrikaners champion Botha's cause of silence

Former South African president, P W Botha, is to be prosecuted for defying a subpoena to appear before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. *Mary Braid reports from Johannesburg*

Prosecutors announced yesterday that Mr Botha, 82, must appear in court later this month for failing to attend a hearing of the TRC, the body set up to expose the atrocities of the apartheid era. Mr Botha has condemned the TRC as a "circus" and a "witchhunt" against Afrikaners.

TRC chairman Archbishop Desmond Tutu has bent over backwards in recent months to avoid the martyring of Mr

Botha, who, despite his recent engagement to a woman half his age, is reported by his lawyers to be in ill health. But all attempts to get the former president to cooperate with the TRC have failed.

There are fears Mr Botha may become a focus for white discontent with the new political dispensation. Mr Botha has refused to testify on the work of the state security council which he chaired in the late 1980s and

which imposed a brutal state of emergency in which thousands of blacks died in clashes with the security forces.

The commission also wants to question Mr Botha about other apartheid-era abuses including border raids into neighbouring countries, the state's chemical warfare programme and the murder of black activists.

Frank Khan, attorney general of the Western Cape, said

yesterday that the decision to prosecute Mr Botha, who faces a substantial fine or two years in prison, had not been easy, given his age and health. But he said that the law, as well as the public interest, demanded a prosecution.

Yesterday Tim du Plessis, assistant editor of the liberal *Afrikaner Beeld* newspaper, said that the TRC had no choice but to press charges, particularly after its nine-day public hear-

ing into murder allegations against Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. The commission had to maintain a political balance.

Mr du Plessis said many Afrikaners did regard the TRC as a witchhunt but it remained to be seen how much support Mr Botha would get. Mr Botha became estranged from the National Party after he was ousted from power by F W de Klerk, the country's last white president. Mr Botha believes Mr de

Klerk, who ended apartheid and began the inevitable journey to black majority rule, sold out the Afrikaner. Yesterday, the NP response was measured. A spokesman said that Mr Kahn had no choice but to prosecute but added that the TRC should not have forced the issue. The far-right-wing Conservative party said it would support Mr Botha and that Mr Kahn's decision was designed to humiliate the Afrikaner nation.



PW Botha: Defiant

Zimbabwe land plan attacked

Britain said yesterday that it could not support a programme by President Robert Mugabe's government to seize some 1,500 white-owned farms and warned that the takeovers would harm Zimbabwe's international credibility.

The Foreign Office minister Tony Lloyd said the programme failed to meet conditions that would allow Britain to contribute aid towards the resettlement of landless blacks on seized properties. He said Britain was also dismayed that some land already acquired by the state for resettlement lay idle long after it was vacated by owners.

Mr Lloyd said that Britain viewed seizures scheduled to start this year as breaching ownership rights, and they were unlikely to benefit the poor and were not being carried out transparently. He said one aim of his two-day visit was to show "there's no ambiguity in Britain's position" on land seizures.

Last November, Mr Mugabe's government released a list of mostly white-owned farms targeted for handover to landless peasants. It gave farmers a month to lodge appeals. Mr Mugabe said then that Britain, the colonial power before independence in 1980, should be the one to compensate "its children". But Mr Lloyd said yesterday: "Britain has no direct obligation in this area."

Farming leaders have predicted a 40 per cent drop in agricultural production if the takeovers begin after the harvesting ends in August. The government has said it will pay only for buildings and improvements on farms, not the land, arguing land was seized from peasants by white settlers.

About 4,000 white farmers own one-third of Zimbabwe's land, with 8 million peasants living on another third.

— AP, Harare



Mystery deaths: Fishing investigators measuring one of more than 140 dolphins' bodies found on Venezuela's La Tortuga Island in the Caribbean. Navy officials said the cause of death was not known, but could be mass suicide, being stranded on the beach after chasing tuna or seaweed poisoning. Photograph: Reuters

Rwanda rebels on rampage

Hutu rebels killed at least 12 Rwandans and abducted 14 others, including alleged Hutu informers, a military official said yesterday.

The rebels killed minority Tutsis as well as Hutus they accused of collaborating with the Tutsi-led government in pre-dawn attacks on Tuesday, said Colonel Kazeze Karake, deputy commander for the region.

All 14 of those abducted from the neighbouring villages of Ngororero and Nyakabanda, 40 kilometres (25 miles) west of Kigali, were Hutus, he said.

Rebels left a note saying they were abducting one man because he had co-operated with the government.

The army did not know what had happened to the missing people.

On Monday, rebels attacked Kibira and Muhororo, 50 kilometres (30 miles) west of Kigali, killing an unknown number of civilians and looting shops, Col Kazeze said.

The rebels include members of Rwanda's defeated militia and army, which slaughtered more than 500,000 people, mostly Tutsis and moderate Hutus, in 1994.

The genocide was stopped by Tutsi rebels, who now control the central African country.

AP, Kigali

Netanyahu under pressure to decide on withdrawal

The US peace envoy, Dennis Ross, meets Israeli and Palestinian leaders this week. At issue is how much pressure he will put on Benjamin Netanyahu over Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank. *Patrick Cockburn in Jerusalem reports on how American demands are threatening to tear Israel's ruling coalition apart.*

Dennis Ross, the American peace envoy, is not a man with a reputation for putting pressure on Israel. In the past Yasser Arafat and other Palestinian leaders have hinted publicly that they regard him as little more than an Israeli agent.

But his present visit is critical for the survival of the Israeli government. Mr Netanyahu,

the Prime Minister, who sees President Bill Clinton in Washington on 20 January, cannot put off a decision on how far Israel is going to withdraw on the West Bank much longer. If he withdraws from at least 10 per cent of the West Bank - as he has promised - then the far-right in the Knesset (parliament) will vote against him. If he does not, then he will lose the support of the centre right, such as the Third Way party.

Mr Netanyahu has succeeded in playing for time before. But Israeli political commentators believe that his administration will have difficulty in surviving for the rest of the year.

The resignation of David Levy, the foreign minister, at the week-end emphasised that the government is in a permanent state of crisis.

Mr Ross has already held talks with Mr Netanyahu who presides over a cabinet increasingly dominated by Ariel Sharon, the Infrastructure Minister, who advocates a minimal withdrawal

on the West Bank. Under the interim accords of 1995, Israel promised to end the occupation of most of the West Bank where 1.5 million Palestinians live.

The American envoy says Mr Netanyahu did not give him details of the intended Israeli withdrawal. He then met Mr Arafat in Bethlehem who told him that Israel had "no more excuses" for delaying troop withdrawals agreed in interim peace deals. "I'm out here to work on the process, to work with both sides to try to find ways to move forward in advance of the meetings that will take place in Washington," Mr Ross told reporters.

The last time peace talks showed any results was when Israel withdrew from most of the West Bank city of Hebron a year ago. With the departure of Mr Levy the only senior cabinet minister favouring a significant withdrawal is Yitzhak Mordechai, the Defence Minister, but he is increasingly isolated.

Another 62 reported dead in Algeria's bloodiest month

Attackers killed 62 civilians and wounded 48 in massacres in Algeria's western province of Relizane, Algerian state-run radio reported yesterday. The province was the scene of previous massacres in which authorities said 78 were killed in one night, though other reports said 400 died. Hundreds of civilians began fleeing the remote mountainous region after a massacre a week ago and the exodus picked up after gunmen attacked two villages. The carnage appeared to confirm the fear of most Algerians that the month of Ramadan has become the bloodiest period for civilian deaths in the country's six-year-old strife.

Reuters, Algiers

New chapter in drug war

The business editor of the *Miami Herald*, unwrapping two cartons labelled "bocles", found 53lb of what appeared to be cocaine, and 8oz of suspected heroin. The package, mailed in the Colombian capital, Bogotá, was worth \$1m (£600,000n). Customs and FBI agents, who had been monitoring the package, confiscated the drugs. They questioned the *Herald* editor but said she was not considered a suspect. The package had been addressed to the business section of the newspaper, with no name.

Phil Davison, Miami

Moi's 'rigged' poll deplored

The Kenyan opposition leader Mwai Kibaki, runner-up to President Daniel arap Moi in last week's elections, said his Democratic Party would sit in parliament but continue to reject the results of what he called a rigged election. "We cannot boycott parliament, because that would be giving Moi a free hand in forming the laws," he told a rally. "We will carry on the fight for the people in parliament." Mr Kibaki's party won 39 seats, coming second to Mr Moi's Kenya African National Union, which won 108.

Reuters, Nairobi

Russians reclaim Christmas

Russians yesterday celebrated the birth of Christ with church services and a children's festival, reclaiming a holiday suppressed under Communism. "Happiness, prosperity, peace and joy," proclaimed the Orthodox Patriarch, Alexy II, outside Moscow's rebuilt Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. Russians schedule their religious observances according to the old Julian calendar. Christmas was banned by the Bolsheviks and restored after the fall of the Soviet Union. AP, Moscow

Montserrat correction

In the story published on 22 December 1997 headed "Montserrat fears Britain's hidden agenda", by Phil Davison, the comments attributed to local businessman John Wilson were in fact made by local Montserratian writer Cheddy Brown. *The Independent* regrets the error, which occurred in the editing process.

— Patrick Cockburn

Jury indecision is lifeline for Oklahoma bomb plotter

The judge in the Oklahoma City bombing trial said yesterday that he would decide the sentence on the convicted conspirator Terry Nichols after the jury in the case could not reach a decision despite two days of deliberations.

Federal judge Richard Matsch said in court that the jury had told him it could not reach a unanimous decision on Nichols' intentions.

The jury convicted Nichols last month of conspiracy and involuntary manslaughter in the April 19, 1995 attack that killed 168 people.

The jury's failure to reach a unanimous decision effectively spared Nichols the death penalty handed to his co-conspirator, Timothy McVeigh, last June. Unlike the jury, Judge Matsch does not have the power to impose a death sentence.

He said he would not set a date for a sentencing hearing until he had heard submissions from both the defence and prosecution lawyers, which he



Nichols: Unlikely to be condemned to death

told them to make by 9 February. Judge Matsch can imprison Nichols for life or choose a shorter sentence.

Jurors, clearly strained by their task - two of them cried in court on Tuesday, including the forewoman - told the judge at the end of the day that they

could not reach a decision. He did not announce this until court opened yesterday.

Judge Matsch told the jurors that they had done their job. "I do not want you to feel that you have in any way failed to meet your responsibility," he said.

A bank clerk on the jury cried and others looked dejected.

Nichols sat expressionless, but after the jury left the room he smiled and hugged one of his lawyers. Another lawyer patted him on the back.

"I guess that's what we hoped and prayed for," said Nichols' sister, Suzanne McDonnell.

McVeigh was convicted of all charges in the bombing of a federal office building in Oklahoma City, an attack that stunned America.

But Nichols was acquitted of murder and of carrying out the attack. He faced the death penalty only for the conspiracy charge.

Reuters, Denver

No gays please - we're Cayman Islanders

The Caymans are not for gay men. That could be the motto of the popular Caribbean resort islands after they turned away a cruise liner chartered by 900 mostly-American gays. Gay and civil rights groups are outraged.

The Norwegian Cruise Line's "love boat", the *Leeward*, had requested a routine seven-hour stopover in the Caymans on a one-week holiday cruise out of Miami starting at the end of this month.

On hearing that the cruise was an all-gay package, the island's tourism minister, Thomas Jefferson, apparently unworried by his famous namesake's efforts towards life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, wrote to

the cruise company last month: "careful research and prior experience has led us to conclude that we cannot count on this group to uphold the standards of appropriate behaviour expected of visitors to the Cayman Islands. So we regretfully cannot offer our hospitality."

The *Leeward* will head instead for the former British colony of Belize to allow its passengers to stop over for shopping and snorkelling.

Gay travel agencies in the US, which estimate worldwide gay business at around \$600m a year, said they would consider a boycott of the Caymans. "It's appalling. I can't believe a country whose economy is based on

tourism would tell an entire class of people they're not welcome," said David Smith of the Human Rights Campaign, a leading gay rights organisation. "It's not only economically foolish. It's morally wrong. We're exploring further action."

Atlantic Events Inc., of California, which chartered the *Leeward*, said it would fax details of the Caymans' decision to 4,500 travel agents in its database. "I find it astonishing that in 1998 you could elicit such a strong response to 900 well-heeled men who want to stop for seven hours of diving and shopping," said Atlantic president Rich Campbell.

— Phil Davison, Miami

Israeli and Turkish warships together with a United States destroyer conducted naval manoeuvres in the east Mediterranean yesterday, sparking denunciations in the Arab world of the new military alliance between Israel and Turkey.

The 12-hour-long exercise, called "Reliant Mermaid", took place off the Israeli port of Haifa. Five vessels - the Israeli missile boats *Lahav* and *Nitzahon*, the Turkish frigates *Yavuz* and *Zafer* and the USS *John Rodgers* - carried out a simulated search-and-rescue exercise looking for survivors of a supposedly sunken fishing vessel.

The operation underlines the strength of the military link between Israel and Turkey, the two strongest military powers in the Middle East, which has developed since they signed a military agreement in 1996. Yitzhak Mordechai, the Israeli defence minister, agreed yesterday that there was a security aspect to the manoeuvres, the first of their kind between Israel and Turkey.

"[They] are not against any other country. It's only to be able to coordinate and to have exercises together," he said. Under the 1996 agreement Israeli aircraft can carry out exercises in Turkish airspace. Israel has also signed contracts worth \$700m (£440m) to up-

grade Turkish airforce F-4 Phantoms and F-5s.

Syria, sandwiched between Turkey and Israel, feels threatened by the new alliance, as do Iran, Iraq and Greece. Turkey's other neighbours, Turkish troops have repeatedly entered northern Iran in pursuit of Kurdish guerrillas.

Egypt believes that its value to the US as a strategic ally is being reduced. An alliance with Turkey may also make it easier for Israel to freeze the Oslo accords with the Palestinians and face a renewed cold war with the Arab world. Only Jordan sent a military contingent to yesterday's exercise.

— Patrick Cockburn

13 JAN 1998

LA gardeners go on hunger strike over right to make a din

A ban on petrol-powered leaf blowers has provoked a culture clash in a city where lawns are manicured as carefully as hair. Tim Cornwell reports from Los Angeles on how a neighbourhood row has taken on the character of a human rights struggle.

The Latino gardeners who keep Los Angeles green and tidy yesterday vowed to continue their hunger strike outside the City Hall, where a small tent city sprang up last Friday. The issue: a council ban on leaf blowers, enacted at the behest of wealthy home-owners and Hollywood stars.

The sight of a Hispanic man with an engine strapped to his back and a giant nozzle in his hand, propelling leaves along the grass or pavement in a coiled cloud of dirt and smoke, has long been a fixture in the better-off areas of L.A. It is a symbol of a city not only addicted to the internal combustion engine, but where immigrants from Latin

America too often appear as second-class citizens, relegated to the jobs of maids, gardeners, and parking attendants.

Exactly how much pollution the leaf blowers add to L.A.'s smog, compared with the engines of its giant cars, has never been calculated. It is the buzz-saw noise that has most infuriated the likes of Peter Graves, the *Mission Impossible* actor, and his wife, Joan. "We're all victims of this machine," he told the council.

The leaf blowers do indeed seem noisy and dirty. But the gardeners say that if they are limited to time-consuming brush or rake, they cannot make enough to live on by clearing lawns or drives on commission, sometimes as many as a dozen a day.

"We have a group of working people, and this is their basic tool that they use every day and we're saying you can't use it," council member Mike Hernandez, who represents the heavily Hispanic east LA, told a packed chamber.

The new law bans the use of petrol-powered leaf blowers within 500 feet of residential areas, at risk of fees and fines of

\$270 (£170) for gardeners and those who hire them. Neighbours can call the police, or make a citizen's arrest. Mayor Richard Riordan, who supports the ban, is expected to sign the measure within 10 days.

A dozen people are now camped outside the City Hall, however, vowing to consume nothing but water and sports drinks. "The situation is really bad for us. We're staying until we have some action," said activist Adrian Alvarez, of Association of Latin American Gardeners.

Environmentalists, spearheaded by Joan Graves and actress Julie Newmar-Catwoman on the *Batman* television show - have campaigned for a dozen years to outlaw the blowers. Other Californian cities, including Beverly Hills, have already banned them. The law was first enacted in mid-1996, but voted through again today, by a 9-6 margin, with amendments that removed a threatened six-month jail term. A more realistic obstacle than the gardeners' protest may be a threatened lawsuit by the machines' manufacturers, who say it is impossible to lower their decibel level.



Actor Peter Graves: 'We are all victims of this machine,' he says, infuriated by the buzz-saw noise of the leaf blowers Photograph: Kobal Collection

Militant protest alarm

Protests against unemployment are gaining strength in France and alarming the government. In Paris reports on the growing politicisation of an underclass of 3 million.

The French government is alarmed by the growing strength of militant protests against unemployment. In Paris, reports on the growing politicisation of an underclass of 3 million. The protests are seen as a sign of the growing anger of the unemployed, who are demanding better conditions and more jobs. The government is trying to calm the situation by offering more support and training programs.

Dead raise shrine to Garcia

With the passing in 1995 of Jerry Garcia, the Grateful Dead reached the end of its weird and wonderful road. But, as David Byrne finds out, Deadheads may soon have a place to go worship. Where? In San Francisco, of course.

It is up to the world's Deadheads to ponder what Jerry Garcia must be thinking. A theme park dedicated to his legacy? Is this the way to memorialise the hand that grew from Haight-Ashbury, the seedbed of 1960s flower power?

Deadheads, of course, are the legions of disciples who for three decades ensured that the hand that named itself the Grateful Dead remained one of the most popular of concert

draws of the entire rock music industry. And, on balance, they must be pleased with the news out of San Francisco.

Surviving members of the venerable group have announced plans to build a giant entertainment and performance complex in the city centre dedicated to their music and to the late Garcia himself, who died of heart trouble in August 1995 after a long battle with drugs.

If all goes well, the centre, which will be as large as the stadiums the band used to perform in, will be built in time for a special opening, with concert, on New Year's Eve 1999. It will be named "Terrapin Station", in honour of one of the group's albums, released in 1977.

The entrance hall of which will resemble a stadium carpark, designed to recapture the atmosphere at the parking lots at Dead concerts, where fans used to gather to trade crafts

foods and their special brand of wisdom before going inside.

Provisional drawings call for restaurants, shops and possibly even a Grateful Dead hotel and apartment complex. There will also be two theatres, one called the Jerry Garcia Theatre, and another, the Wheel, a multimedia dance hall with holograms of the man himself.

Any comparisons with Mickey Mouse are not welcome, however. "This is not a theme park," group manager Cameron Sears said.

Hopes are high that 1.2 million Deadheads will visit the new shrine every year. Band members have pledged \$3.5m (£2.1m) to construction costs which are expected to reach around \$60m. Of that, \$1.5m will come from sales last year of a CD box-set of a 1990 live performance. Stock will be offered, meanwhile, to other interested investors.

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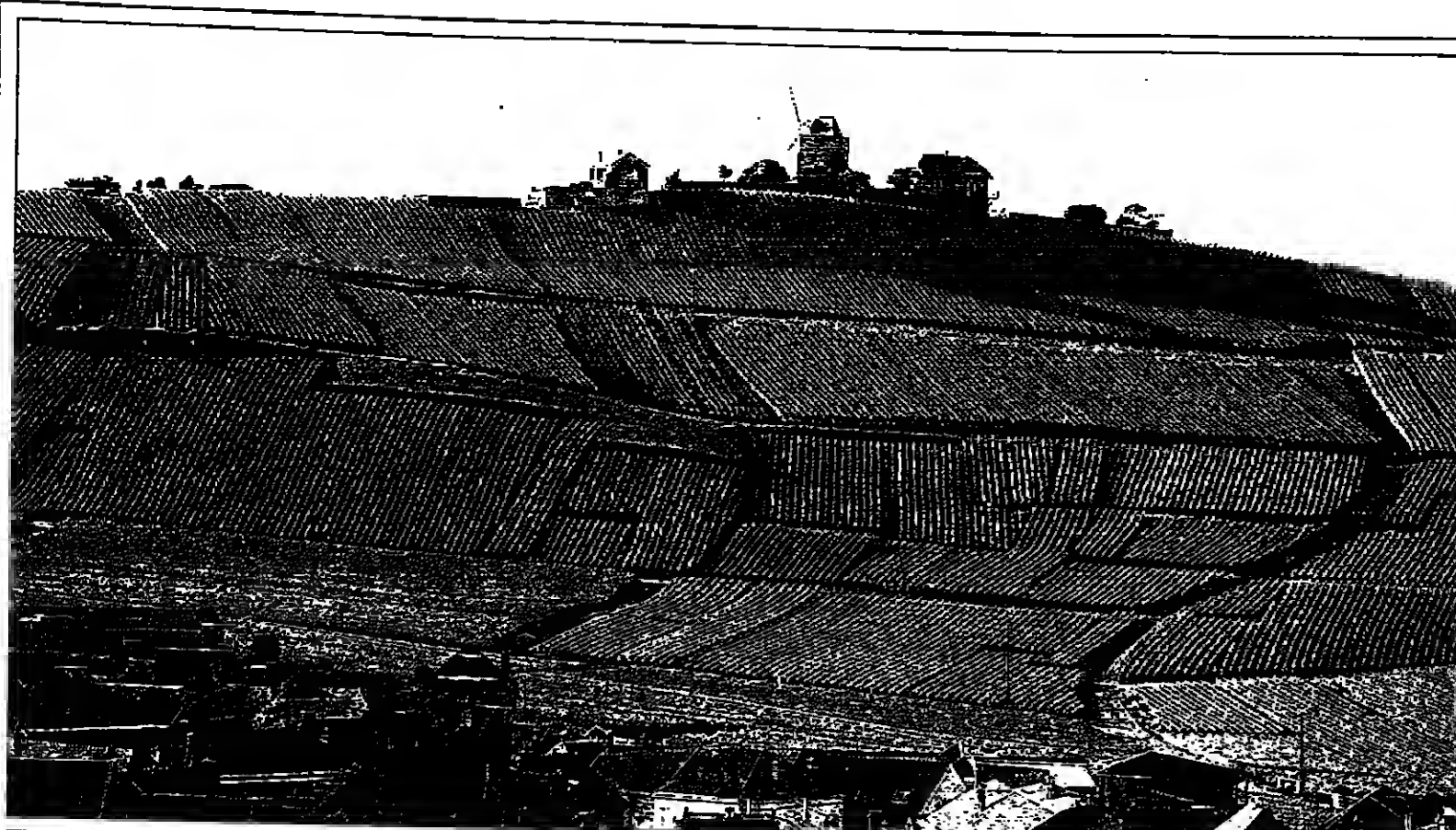
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The real thing: Verzenay, Montagne de Reims, in the champagne region of France, which guards the champagne name Photograph: Patrick Eagar

French in a fizz over wine from Swiss Champagne

Champagne is a small village in Switzerland (population 700), whose name has been its fortune. It may soon become its misfortune.

Following complaints by French wine producers, the village has been ordered to cease labelling its wine - which is white but non-hubby - as "wine from Champagne." The French fraud squad seized 3,000 bottles of the Swiss champagne, actually a kind of Pinot, from French supermarkets over the Christmas period.

The affair threatens to become a source of friction between Switzerland and the European Union, which has taken France's side in the case.

Villagers point out that their commune has been called Champagne for 1,143 years. Besides, they say, they are not trying to pass off their wine as

"champagne". The bottles, which do not resemble champagne bottles, are labelled wine from the "commune vaudoise de Champagne" or "wine from the vaudoise bank of lake Neuchâtel, Champagne appellation d'origine".

The French producers, backed by Paris and Brussels, argue that this is a deliberate attempt to cash in on the celebrity of the champagne name. The mayor of Champagne, Albert Bandcret, says this is bullying and unfair.

"We have no problem with making it as clear as possible that our produce is Swiss, but we will not give up the right to use the name of our commune, which goes back to the year 855."

After a long wrangle, a deal was reached in 1991 between France and Switzerland, al-

lowing the local biscuit-makers to use the word. But champagne producers have fought battles all around the world to protect the sanctity of the brand-name of their wine.

Swiss officials were forced to concede the point last year during tricky negotiations in Brussels on a range of EU-Swiss farm trade issues. A draft agreement, still not formally ratified by Switzerland, recognises the sole right of the French region to market wine called champagne or to use the word champagne as an "appellation d'origine".

The deal is being disputed by Swiss politicians. A local MP, Martial Girod, asked: "Must we one day abolish the name of one of our villages just to help negotiations between Switzerland and the EU?"

— John Lichfield, Paris

Militant dole protests alarm Jospin

Protests against unemployment are gaining strength in France and alarming the government. John Lichfield in Paris reports on the growing politicisation of an underclass of 3 million.

The French government sought yesterday, with a bizarre mixture of praise and cash, to head off a rapidly spreading revolt by the long-term unemployed. Peaceful demonstrations in Paris and a score of provincial towns added to the pressure from a rolling programme of sit-ins at dole offices around the country.

Reversing her earlier condemnation of the protests, the employment minister Martine Aubry praised the demonstrators' "citizenship" and "commitment". She also promised the government would provide more public cash to help the semi-private agency which administers the dole in France to find extra money for "urgent cases".

The agency, Unedic, jointly run by employers and unions, was meeting last night to consider the details. The Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin, is expected to make a further statement today to try to calm a campaign which threatens the unity of his left-of-centre coalition government.

Up to 5,000 unemployed people and left-wing activists demon-

strated outside the Unedic headquarters in Paris yesterday afternoon and then marched on the economic ministry. Similar demonstrations were held in towns all over France. The protesters, organised by pressure groups for the long-term jobless and the hard-liners of the Communist trade unions movement, are demanding higher dole and an end-of-year bonus of £300.

Although the numbers involved are still relatively small, the movement has been rapidly gathering strength in the last three weeks and enjoys considerable public sympathy.

The Jospin government has been shaken by the protests, with green and Communist ministers supporting the demonstrators and Ms Aubry originally condemning them as "illegal". Mr Jospin has, by all accounts, persuaded Ms Aubry to take a softer line but also decided to intervene himself.

The most alarming feature of the protests from Mr Jospin's point of view is that the newly militant unemployed are not demanding work but better benefits. This runs against his government's policy of promoting growth by keeping down public spending while tinkering with the length of the working week to try to create more jobs.

Campaign leaders warned last night that they expected concrete promises from Mr Jospin today or they would "continue to extend the movement".

New fears at Chernobyl

The condition of the shell covering Chernobyl's ruined nuclear reactor worsened over 1997, increasing the chances it will collapse and release radioactive dust, an official said. Studies last year showed that the roof of the concrete-and-steel shelter is in bad shape and a collapse is becoming "more and more" likely, said Chernobyl deputy director Valentin Kupny.

The beams holding up the roof are in "catastrophic condition," said Mr Kupny, who is responsible for the sarcophagus that was hastily built over the reactor after the 1986 disaster.

There are 34 metric tons of radioactive dust in the structure, and that amount increases by several tons every year as fuel masses break up.

— AP, Kiev

Feminists claim Mermaid's head

The beloved statue of the Little Mermaid in Copenhagen was decapitated as a protest against sexism, a previously unknown group said in a statement yesterday.

Danish television stations received a statement purportedly from the Radical Feminist Faction, claiming responsibility for the vandalism of the statue on Tuesday. "We have sawed off the head of the Little Mermaid, which is a symbol of hostility to women and of men's sexually obsessed dreams in which women only are bodies with no head," the statement said.

Niels Abildgaard, of the Copenhagen police, said that the authorities had not heard of the group but were taking the claim seriously.

— AP, Copenhagen

Germany's brief concession

Never again will German soldiers be embarrassed by what is lurking under their trousers. The defence ministry, in a brief statement yesterday, consented to the squaddies' age-old demand. Henceforth, they may wear boxers, Y-frocks or whatever takes their fancy. It was noticed that the regulation issue white undershirts and pants never left the barracks. "It turned out a lot of soldiers, particularly when they were going out, didn't find them sexy enough," a ministry spokesman explained. Conscripts will now have a choice between the regular underwear or DMSO (£17.25) to buy their own.

— Imre Karacs, Bonn



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Hong Kong ends help to boat people

The Hong Kong government will announce today that it is to end its 19-year-old policy of granting a port of first asylum to Vietnamese boat people. Stephen Vines in Hong Kong reports that this brings to an end a controversial humanitarian effort which has seen almost 200,000 Vietnamese make their way to the territory's shores.

The decision to end the first asylum policy, taken at a meeting of Hong Kong's Executive Council on Tuesday, came after China made it clear that it would not tolerate any Vietnamese asylum seekers in its new territory.

The move will be popular in Hong Kong where there is resentment over the amount of money spent on the Vietnamese. There is also resentment over their right to land which contrasts with the plight of illegal immigrants from the Chinese mainland who are immediately deported.

Under pressure from Britain, Hong Kong reluctantly took on the burden of allowing boat people to land in the hope they would be resettled in third countries. Neighbouring countries such as Singapore and Malaysia were pushing the boats back out to sea. Many lost their lives to pirates or were raped and robbed while at sea.

At the height of the flight from Vietnam in 1979, after the fall of Saigon, almost 69,000 boat people landed in Hong Kong in a single year.

Very quickly the government ran out of space to house the asylum seekers. At one stage the authorities had to resort to taking over an empty factory and commandeered the military airport to accommodate the tens of thousands awaiting resettlement.

The countries, including Britain, who promised to give new homes to the Vietnamese were less than generous in granting immigration visas. As a result, generations of boat people families were born and raised in the grim camps where they were treated as prisoners, although guilty of no crime.

By 1988, it was decided to treat all boat people as illegal immigrants unless they could prove they qualified for refugee status. A tough screening policy was introduced, then in 1989 the government embarked on a policy of forced deportation.

From that point on it was made increasingly difficult for the Vietnamese to obtain refugee status. However the outflow could not be capped. In 1991 another 20,000 boat people landed in Hong Kong.

Before taking over Hong Kong, the Chinese authorities told the British government that it wanted all the Vietnamese cleared out of the former colony. Yet 3,364 are still here, most living in a heavily fortified detention centre in a remote area. Almost 400 cannot go back to Vietnam as they are ethnic Chinese who are not recognised as citizens by the Vietnamese authorities.

The Hong Kong government claims that all those entering the territory in recent times are economic migrants, seeking work in the relatively prosperous territory.



Arrivals: Carabinieri escort 25 Kurdish immigrants who swam the last few metres to Frassanito beach yesterday from a boat bringing them to Italy. Photograph: Paolo Cocco/Reuters

Britain leads action to stem flow of Kurds to Europe

Alarmed by an "influx" of Kurdish refugees, EU governments look set to endorse a British-led crackdown on illegal immigrants to prevent any more Kurds leaving Turkey or Iraq, writes Katherine Butler.

Amid fears that the continent's passport-free travel zone could be overwhelmed by a flood of Kurds from Turkey and Iraq, European police chiefs gather in Rome today to map out a security strategy.

Italy, where almost 2,000 Kurds arrived last week, is expected to come under pressure particularly from the Germans, to supply detailed intelligence on mafia gangs suspected of trafficking in clandestine migrants, and to tighten legislation which allows potential refugees to remain in the country for two weeks.

Police heads from those countries most concerned - Italy, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, France, Greece and Turkey - will attend against the backdrop of warnings from Italian coastguards that another ship carrying Kurdish refugees is on the way.

Under a barrage of criticism from its European Union neighbours, particularly the Germans, who fear they will end up bearing the brunt of the latest influx, Italian leaders were forced yesterday to reassure Bonn that they would enforce border controls and deal with

asylum applications individually, not collectively.

But while the short term focus is on Italian coastal controls, the political reaction in EU capitals yesterday was to lend backing to a British "action plan" which civil liberties groups and human-rights organisations are likely to view as a threat to international legal safeguards for those genuinely fleeing persecution.

Although Britain is not a signatory of the Schengen accord, which was designed to allow passport-free travel throughout Europe, British proposals received strong support when national migration and asylum experts from all 15 EU member states met in Brussels yesterday to consider new measures.

Possible lines of action which

could be endorsed by Home Affairs ministers when they meet in Birmingham on 27 January, include a plan to issue airlines with clear warnings on their liability to weed out Turkish or Iraqi Kurds travelling to the EU.

Another is urgently to implement "Eurodac", a controversial system for compulsory fingerprinting of immigrants and asylum seekers. Visa procedures would also be coordinated and tightened while airline officials would be given training to help them spot forged documents.

Member state officials admitted last night that the plan could raise fears for the safety of those who genuinely need international protection, but stressed that the political problem facing Europe must be

tackled urgently. Germany and Holland between them already house around 25,000 Kurdish refugees, experts were told yesterday, and tensions could follow the admission of another wave.

The refugee question is to be reviewed when the European Commission meets the British EU presidency in London today, but last night the Commission was anxious to play down the perceived crisis. It was important not to "exaggerate" the problem posed by the arrival of "a few hundred" Kurds, said a statement.

In Belgium, meanwhile, 11 Kurdish refugees called off a hunger strike after receiving assurances that they would not be expelled until a full investigation is carried out into their cases.

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RICH BOLT THE DOORS

Rich countries are increasingly worried that too many refugees will come knocking at their doors. Just 10 years ago, when the Iron Curtain was still in place, Western governments could afford to be more generous. Those fleeing persecution had a good chance of being taken in - because so few of them managed to reach the West in the first place.

Now, the open borders of Europe mean things are more porous than ever before. Governments are determined to lock and bolt the doors.

The arrival of hundreds of would-be Kurdish refugees in Italy has led to a remarkably hardline response from those countries that most fear that they will be the Kurds' eventual destination.

Germany has led the chorus of indignation - and has angered refugee organisations. Don Flynn, of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, believes that the hullabaloo in Germany is unnecessary: "There's no evidence to suggest that Europe is facing a refugee crisis. This is something which is generated out of election year." He insists that the Italian action in saying it would consider applications from arriving Kurds was "entirely unexceptional".

Mr Flynn was critical, too, of Britain's contribution to the asylum debate. The Home Office said yesterday it had prepared a "draft action plan" for consideration by the EU, to deal with "the serious problem of illegal immigration and organised crime".

— Steve Crawshaw

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Taste f

Quinn's sinister and memorable film sets are in stark contrast with the William Morris wallpaper and bright colours she has chosen to decorate her new home. But her subversive vision is still in play, says Noreen Niesewand.

Quinn's new house in south-west London may be in a modest Victorian terrace, but everything Kate Quinn is doing looks larger than life. Her taste for using colour and pattern in film-sets, including her new home, has made her one of today's hottest stars in the industry. Hardly surprising, then, that in the new she is decorating with her own subversive vision.

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Dockers vs

Members of the choice for the new parliament have precious little time to spare to have a say, writes Noreen Niesewand.

Members of the choice for the new parliament have precious little time to spare to have a say, writes Noreen Niesewand. The new parliament is set to open in May, and members will have to find time to prepare for their new roles. The House of Commons will be the first to meet, followed by the House of Lords. The new parliament will be the first to meet in the new millennium.

Taste for a life less ordinary

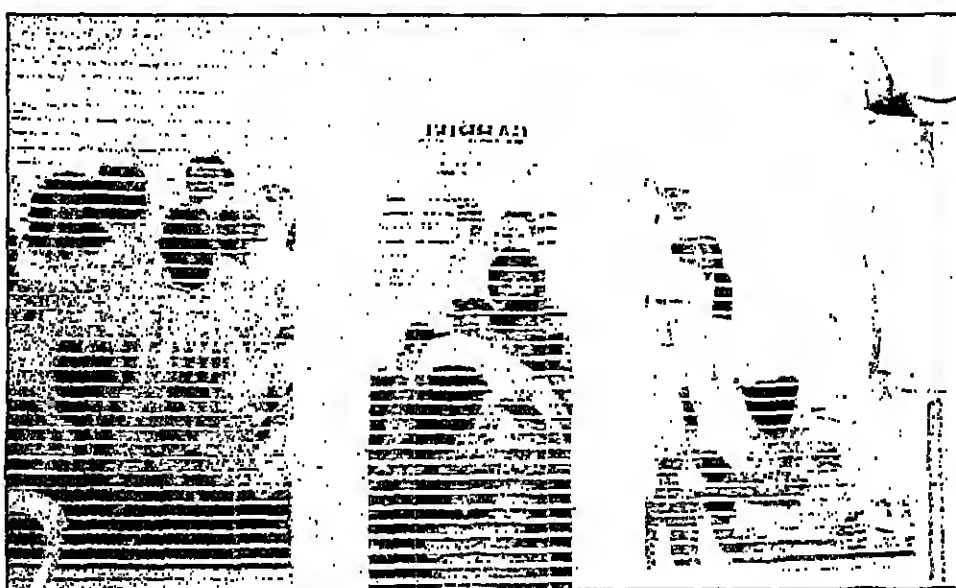
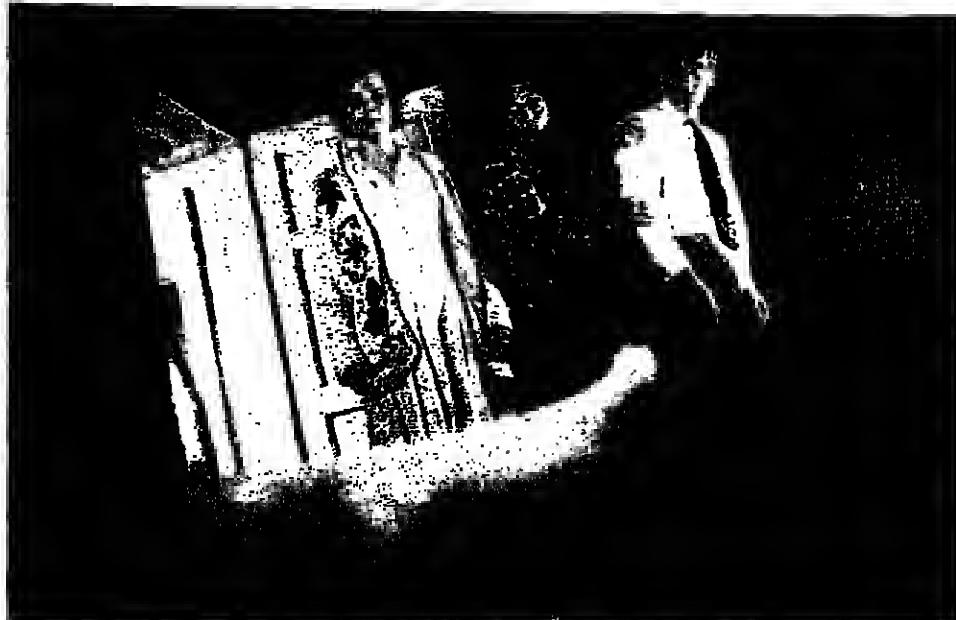
Kave Quinn's sinister and memorable film sets are in stark contrast with the William Morris wallpaper and bright colours she has chosen to decorate her new home. But her subversive vision is still in play, says Nonie Niesewand.

Kave Quinn's new house in north-west London may be in a modest Victorian terrace, but everything Kave Quinn is doing to it looks larger than life. Her talent for using colour and pattern in film-sets including *Trainspotting*, *Shallow Grave* and *A Life Less Ordinary*, has made her one of today's hottest talents in the industry. Hardly surprising, then, that in the home she is decorating with her partner, Aidan, she does everything celluloid-style.

The smaller the room, the bigger the scale of the pattern she chooses for the walls. And the more intense the colour. Humble little spaces mutate under theatrical handblocked archival wallpaper from Sandersons. There are willow fronds on steroids designed by William Morris in the front parlour, big birds crouching among tulips coloured by Voysey in pink and purple and lemon, with matching woodwork, in their bedroom. Colours in these wall-papers are so intense it takes a week to print each one - they don't come cheap. Labels on the paint tins - Silver Sky, Golden Aspen, Zephyr Green, Sky Violet, Bardot Red, Magnolia Red - only hint at the hallucinogenic effect she is creating.

"I especially like complementary colours. Blue and orange. Pink and green. They zing," Kave Quinn takes colouring in so seriously she visited a mortuary to get the right bedroom wall colour for the Edinburgh flat in the award-winning *Shallow Grave*, in which the life of three young professionals gradually falls apart when they find their new flatmate dead in bed soon after his arrival. Until then the interior of the flat could have been an advertisement for Ikea, with pale pine chairs around the nestle tables, big squashy sofas in red and green with contrasting cushions. But the power of colour and light can change a mood, as Quinn well knows. The sickly blue she chose to off-set the pallor of death in the dead man's room hit the screen at the exact moment when the film turned nasty. Not just the plot but the colours thicken as they shift from bright sunlight to sinister twilight. Shadows lengthen.

In her own home, Kave Quinn has gone for cosy colours, but I doubt that a band of Merrie Olde Englanders would feel at home there. Before you even get to the archival wallpapers, the hall with pale violet walls, brilliant aqua-



Kave Quinn, creator of sets for 'Shallow Grave', 'Trainspotting' and 'A Life Less Ordinary' (above left, top to bottom), demonstrates her latest look - Arts and Crafts, Nineties style

Nicola Kurtz

rine skirting boards and dark green ceramic tiled floor gives the game away. This isn't Arts and Crafts revisited. It glorifies all that earnest worthiness and subverts it, Nineties style. I can't see the Rossettis reciting poetry in Quinn's front room, papered with a wavy mauve and ivory leaf pattern from Morris that reflects in the mirror she found while filming in an abandoned home for the mentally disabled in Surrey. Any more than the pre-Raphaelites would play the spinet under her plastic chandelier. The furniture either follows sinuous shapes upholstered in crimson and lime

green by Tricia Guild of the Designers' Guild, or Mormon plain Jane furniture that Quinn picked up on location at Salt Lake City while filming *A Life Less Ordinary*. For that film, she had to design Heaven - and it's all white. Not a touch of magnolia but a white so dazzling and pristine that the camera crew had to wear surgical boots and gloves to film it.

Quinn's skill lies in mixing wildly different aesthetics, drawing ideas from disparate sources and morphing them into design statements. So it's not surprising she dislikes special effects. Rag-rolling, scumbling, stencilling and all that "picked-over" look

of paint effects are abhorrent to her. So is that completely co-ordinated look of Laura Ashley, "the whole thing mixed and matched, even to what you wear. Just like the Stepford wives."

Standing in the glacier blue conservatory that she and Aidan call a glass-topped extension room - "conservatory is too middle class" - she explains how she first discovered wallpapers in an old shop in Paisley, Scotland, while making props for *Trainspotting*. Chuffertain Sixties wallpaper in primary colours for the boyhood room where Ewan McGregor's character, Begbie, suffered cold turkey. The difficulty when

styling *Trainspotting* was not to glamourise heroin addiction - or to adopt a documentary style, all film and degradation, that would revolt viewers. So Quinn tried another angle to make it more interesting. She used Francis Bacon's canvases as an inspiration for the film's intense, day-glo pinks and oranges, as well as for camera angles to get that peculiar sense of isolation. Distance and scale are important to her. She paced out with pro-dresser Danny Boyle every set and laid chalk marks. They often exaggerated room dimensions to get long shots.

"Films aren't remembered

for their designs," she says modestly. "But I like to add another dimension, not necessarily beautiful but to make you see things differently. Like that red bedcover in the blue bedroom in *Shallow Grave*, which was so decadent."

Decadence as an ideal dates back to her days as a punk with pink hair, wearing her own designer clothes and strutting her stuff up Tottenham Court Road. She's very gentle and shy so it must have been worn like a warrior's costume. Then she went to Central St Martin's College of Art and Design and designed her own textiles and collections a year ahead of

John Galiano. Costume design appealed to her but everything in the mid-Eighties was frozen in period-piece costume dramas and she was too creative for that. So she went to film school, started styling ads and worked as an art director and production director on promos, TV films and features. With producer Andrew MacDonald - whom she met at film school - and Danny Boyle as director, *Shallow Grave*, her first major film, became an international box-office success story.

Now she wants to design textiles again and do some more interior work. She had to turn down *The Full Monty* because

she was on location in the US, but she says it was the best film of last year. Besides film work, she also designed an office for a film production company in an old warehouse in King's Cross and thinks it would be good to do more of that. Then there's her second child, due at the end of January, and the house to move into. "The incredible thing about Quinn, along with her strong sense of colour and space," says Danny Boyle, "is that you know on the day that everything will be absolutely perfect. It doesn't matter what I decide to do at the last minute. She'll have covered the eventuality."

Dockers vs Miss Jean Brodie, final round

Arguments of the choice of a site for the new Scottish parliament have left precious little time for the public to have their say, writes Nonie Niesewand.

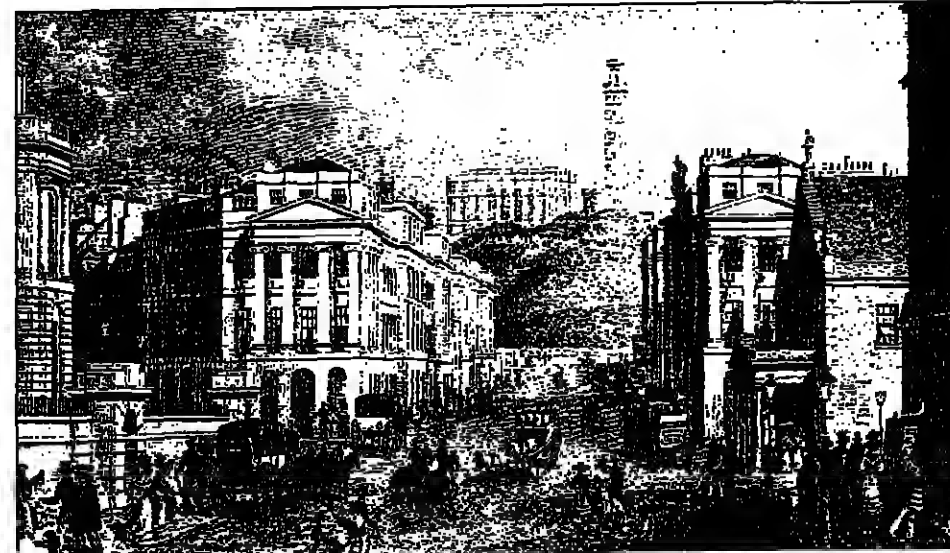
The Scottish Parliament doesn't open until January 1999 but unless the site is chosen soon there won't be a building for the 100 to 129 MSPs to debate in. There still isn't a location, let alone an architect. The Secretary of State for Scotland, Donald Dewar, is expected to announce the location this week with little public discussion of the relative merits of the competing sites. Time may be of the essence, but so is money. In assessing the four short-listed sites, the Scottish Office has realised that it underestimated the size of building required. So the total costs will spiral beyond the budgeted £40m to between £50m and £65m.

In September, after the "yes" vote for Scottish devolution, there were two sites under consideration, Calton Hill and Leith dockside. Leith, or the gateway of Edinburgh as its en-

thusiastic backers call it, can be seen from the Firth of Forth and from Fife, and is bang opposite the Scottish Office. But MSPs don't fancy the schlep out to docklands and transport there would need a big overhaul.

The popular Calton Hill version, by architects Page and Page, is close to the city centre, Princes Street and the mainline railway station. Their design includes a natty little debating rotunda to tie in with the old St Andrew's school, which could become the offices.

The trouble started when key figures in the Scottish Office and Edinburgh city council became locked in conflict over these two sites. *The Scotsman* newspaper was clear: "The site for Scotland's parliament must be Calton Hill... not anywhere else." As the argument increasingly began to resemble dockers vs Miss Jean Brodie, a third proposed site at Haymarket was introduced. Unlike to be a runner, it would require building over railway tunnels. Just before Christmas a fourth potential site, Holyrood, was entered when its present occupants, Scottish and Newcastle Breweries, announced they would move HQ. This tips it tactically into the lead.



'The site for Scotland's parliament must be Calton Hill,' thundered 'The Scotsman'

Whatever site is chosen will affect the type of building. You can't build Alexander the Greek Thompson neo-Classicism on the dockside, anymore than Calton Hill will deconstruct. John Pelan at the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland illustrates the point when he says that he'd vote to get Frank Gehry to build an incredible Parliament in Leith.

Alas, that isn't a runner. Writing to Donald Dewar on 11 December about the need to ex-

tend the consultation periods over the four sites to make the decision-making more democratic, the President of RIAS George Wren quoted Thomas Jefferson: "I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of Society but the peoples themselves. And if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion."

In the calm between Christ-

mas and New Year, four feasibility studies of each site went on public view for a few days each in Edinburgh and Glasgow as the pros and cons were assessed by four firms of architects. Expressing the hope that as many people as possible will see the exhibition, Donald Dewar jocularly remarked: "It will make a good break from the New Year sales." Let's hope that in the rush they don't end up with the architectural equivalent of a bargain basement.

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18/TAKING CONTROL



The hand that rocks the cradle: how can parents be sure that the seemingly well-adjusted girl they interviewed turns out to be safe with their child?

Photograph: John Lawrence

WHERE CHARLOTTE WENT WRONG

Gail Aspland Robinson runs Childhood Nannies, an agency based in south London.

Far too many working mothers feel held to ransom by nannies. They tip-toe around them, worried that if they criticise the nanny she may take it out on the children while they are at work.

But most professional nannies can handle criticism – you just have to say it in the nicest possible way. Good communications are critical; if you let things slide, a minor issue can become a mountain. Aim to have an informal discussion at least once a month, when the children aren't around, perhaps over dinner. Say what is working well, but also what isn't. The more you get to know your nanny, the better you can manage the relationship.

Then, if they don't respond and you still have doubts, you should go through oral and written warnings. Nannies are now more aware of their employment rights, and you have to behave in a professional way as well.

In this particular case, I feel the mother could have taken action sooner. A nanny shouldn't drink when baby-sitting and Clare should have been dismissed at that stage, or at least given a final written warning. It wasn't a "one-off"; it is suggested she drank heavily. It is no different from taking drugs. When a nanny lives in your house you have the right to comment on what they do in their own time.

After completing an NNEB course, Katie Potter has worked as a live-in nanny for two-and-a-half years.

This story sounds horrific, and Clare was lucky to keep her job for so long. OK, lots of nannies have drunken nights out at weekends, but you don't drink on duty – which includes the time when you are baby-sitting.

It was good that the parents showed an interest in Clare's career, but I'm not sure they did enough to help her when she got depressed. They kept giving her another chance, even after she had dropped their child. She clearly kept on drinking too much. The children's well-being was in danger.

Peter Cullimore is chairman of child care at the Federation of Recruitment and Employment Services (FRES).

The legal position is that, unless there has been "gross misconduct", you should go through the formal disciplinary procedures – an oral and then a written warning before dismissal. But with a nanny, we recommend that once the trust has broken down it is time to part company. Children are involved, so it is probably better to ask the nanny to leave immediately and give her a month's pay in lieu of notice.

FRES's standard nanny contract of employment lists theft, drunkenness, illegal drug-taking and child abuse as reasons for summary dismissal. The parents should have taken action long before they did – I think, when the nanny dropped the child. If a nanny is drunk on your premises, you should say good-bye. Also, people with a drink problem are marvellous at concealing it; you just can't take any risks where children are concerned.

A nanny will build affection for children, but these parents made the mistake of letting her get too attached. A nanny must not become a substitute for the parents.

Nanny on the bottle, parents in the soup

Charlotte Roberts and her husband had always been happy with their nannies in the past. Then along came Clare. We continue our series on the anxieties of the Nineties with a story of how professionals on top of their careers can lose their grip at home...

Downstairs I can hear the cheerful voices of my two youngest with our latest nanny, a jolly, caring, helpful and apparently straightforward Antipodean, who "lives out" and has an active, but not intrusive, social life.

But three months ago I had to sack Clare, our nanny of almost three years – and sacking a long-serving, live-in nanny is inevitably a fraught experience.

Clare was introduced to us by a reputable, London-based nanny agency. Both my husband and I have demanding jobs and we needed an experienced, live-in nanny for our three children, who were then all under four. We had already been employing nannies for three years. I checked Clare's references carefully by phone, and all her recent employers said she was wonderful with children. So she moved into our house and, though painfully shy, settled in quickly. We talked through a written contract for child care duties from 7.30am to 7pm, plus baby-sitting two nights a week, and she did this with apparent ease. Never mind that in the first few weeks she had a few drunken nights out at the weekends. That was none of our business.

We all muddled along quite happily for two years. We even enjoyed the approba-

tion of having happily kept our nanny for so long. But then we rounded into 1997.

Clare had been a nanny for 12 years and was clearly fed up with it – she said that while she was happy looking after our children, she wanted to do more with her life. So, having helped her complete a formal child care qualification, we discussed what other training she might do while working for us, and what career she might move on to. I introduced her to a career counsellor and some other contacts – but she went round and round in circles, unable to decide what to do. Then we noticed that from her planning to move on, we had in fact become the focal point of her life.

Her social life – always scraped together in a rather desperate fashion and focused on getting drunk – had all but disappeared. I found her tipsy and in tears in her room one night, saying she felt unloved and unwanted. "Why do people keep letting me down, why don't they make the effort to go out with me?"

On reflection, I realised that while the local nanny circuit was active for her by day, no one seemed to want to socialise with her in their free time.

Then, one Saturday night, she did agree to meet friends in a pub. She came downstairs to wait for her taxi, and was clearly drunk. She swept my youngest child into her arms for a playful cuddle, but then lost her footing and dropped her on the floor. Apart from shock, my daughter suffered no injuries, but we were furious. Clare was mortified, and only the arrival of her taxi brought the incident to an end.

Another night soon after that, we got ready to go out for my husband's birthday and were astonished when Clare appeared downstairs ready to baby-sit. We knew the



sober Clare – quiet, shy, and buried in her fridge – and the drunk Clare – verbose, over-familiar, words slurred and clumsy. This was the latter. We went out over-the-top, fell sick throughout the evening and returned early.

The next afternoon I took a deep breath and expressed my concerns. She was mortified, and retreated into the fridge and a frozen silence. Eventually she told me that she was feeling depressed due to some recent bad news, as well as her worries about her future career. Yes, she would cut down the drinking and sort herself out. The next day I found a "So sorry" card, some flowers and, ironically, a bottle of wine.

But my good intentions backfired. All I did with my sympathetic chat was drive the drinking underground. She hid bottles in her room and regularly tipped at night – at weekends, as well as weekdays. When she reeled downstairs from her room, we were never sure whether we would find her just a bit chatty, or incoherent and dropping the kitchen crockery.

When is too much, too much? Her drinking was, as far as we knew, only in the evenings; we drank wine with dinner, a bottle between us, quite often. Did we have the right to tell her not to drink at night? We had endless discussions, testing our views against those of friends and family.

We had no further "serious" baby-sitting incidents, though we often felt uneasy when we went out at night. But then on two consecutive nights she baby-sat for friends

of ours and returned home tipsy. Shortly after this we noticed that she was regularly helping herself to our wine without asking – in what must have been surreptitious sips, even as we sat next door in the evenings. We moved the wine from direct temptation, but she quickly tracked it down and helped herself. So, with some trepidation, I had to talk to her again.

There was more mortification, more tears, more sleepless nights – mine and hers. During another sympathetic discussion with me she promised reform, but she didn't want to call the counselling services I had tracked down for her. Another "Sorry" card appeared, and some more flowers. We should have acted, but didn't; I was very busy at work, the kids seemed happy – why break it all up?

A few weeks later we went to stay with friends at a remote country location, and Clare came to help. The secretive and guilty night-time drinking came with her. One evening she joined us and our friends for dinner – something of a precedent, as up till then she had always preferred to eat with the children. She appeared downstairs drunk – she was unsteady on her feet, and slurring her words. At dinner she ate like a bird and drank like a fish, and became loud-mouthed and barely coherent. Something in me snapped – that was it.

Two days later, with my children safely away on a trip with a friend, I faced her: "I'm sorry, it's over – you have to go." With a massive intake of breath, she raced out of the house into the garden, where she ran round and round like a madwoman, screaming at the top of her voice. "No, not this. No! No! No!"

Alone in the house in the middle of nowhere, I discreetly hid the kitchen

knives, had my finger at the ready to dial 999 on the mobile phone, and waited for her to calm down and come back in.

But calming down took a further three hours of hyperventilation and crying, endless pleading – "Please, please not this, I'll do anything, anything, but not this" – and pitiful phone calls to friends and family. I finally persuaded her into a taxi in which she was ferried to our London home, where a relative had been installed to ensure she did herself, and our house, no harm.

She moved out after a few days and, though her contract specified four weeks' notice, we gave her 10 weeks' money as a financial cushion. She went home and, to my relief, sought medical advice and counselling. But we are not off the hook yet. We have had letters, postcards, farewell cards, more "Sorry" cards, a stream of "Missing you so much and love you heaps" cards for the children, plus phone calls.

Also, more scarily, we have had to fend off requests to see the children, to pick them up from school, to ice their birthday cakes – and then, in response to our reluctance, a visit, "Just to say good-bye".

Yes, we should have acted earlier, because we put our children at risk, and we consumed so much energy discussing what, or what not, to do to try to be reasonable. But the dismissal was always going to be painful, and because of that we felt we had to be sure of our ground.

We may sound pathetically indecisive or negligent. To others we may sound unfeeling, judgemental and unkind. Whatever your reaction, just pray you don't find yourself in the same situation – the employment rule book won't help you, either.

The names in this article have been changed.

How to bring the etiquette of the workplace into your home

Stretched, dual-income couples who depend on 'support staff' at home may need to take their role as employers more seriously, says Roger Trapp.

Whenever the subject of parents and nannies or other carers comes up, the emphasis is usually on making sure that you pick the right person – rather than ensuring that you get along, having gone through all the effort to find them.

Yet proprietors of nanny agencies, and nannies themselves, point to some common irritants. These include parents who insist in the morning that they will be home on time, then habitually call at the end of the afternoon to say that they have been held up; lack of communication; and confusion over tasks and responsibilities.

What is curious about these complaints is that they are just the sort of thing that the par-

ents themselves would find irritating coming from a colleague or a superior in their own place of work. A large part of the problem, it seems, is that work done in the home – whether child care, house-keeping, cleaning or gardening – is somehow not seen as quite the same as that done in a conventional workplace.

We even seem to be embarrassed about employing people in this way. As one observer put it, while people are generally proud to create a job in their business, when it comes to employing somebody at home there is a certain amount of guilt, or at least discomfort.

This is reflected in the fact that people talk about having "help" in the home, as opposed to "employing" somebody. This can lead to the employers skirting around issues such as holidays and overtime rates in a way that they would not dream of doing at the office.

Work Family Directions, a

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

- 1 Go through an agency or ask on personal recommendation. If using an agency, make sure they remain responsible for the people on their books.
- 2 Check all references and if necessary speak to past employers.
- 3 Establish the ground rules from day one. Don't leave anything unsaid, no matter how small the point may be. Employees should know exactly what they are getting themselves into.
- 4 Try to be around on the first day. This will put your mind at rest. But don't watch your

new employee like a hawk, as this will make him/her behave unnaturally.

- 5 Determine whether you are going to be addressed by your first name or more formally, by your title.
- 6 It is important not to be too matey, even though you may like your employee. And don't be too controlling or distant. The 'Upstairs, Downstairs' days are long gone, and your employee is not just a servant, but treat him/her as a professional, and be open to their ideas or suggestions.
- 7 Try leaving little lists of things

that need to be done. That way, your employee will be achieving the objectives you are after.

And especially for nannies:

- 1 Organise at least two interviews, one for yourself and one for the children, to see whether they establish any immediate bond with your potential employee.
- 2 Work out who will discipline the children if you are both around. Then always back one another up.
- 3 Always give your nanny a contract, which states the length

of his/her working week. And don't eat into an employee's free time.

- 4 Become a confidant – albeit at a distance. This will establish a degree of warmth, and show you are interested in your nanny as a person. Always ask how her day went, and whether the children have done anything new.
- 5 Keep a joint diary with your nanny. This will minimise the risk of clashing with those extra baby-sitting duties.

Compiled by Nicole Yeash with the help of Kensington Nannies

out that many people have trouble instigating such formal arrangements in their own homes. After all, it is all very well being businesslike in the office, but in that situation you are usually not working in somebody's home, and certainly not staying there at night. And although observing how colleagues behave towards each other can provide good or bad examples at work, you rarely get the opportunity to observe such models at home.

One working woman is adamant that it is essential to avoid thinking that you can be friends with the people you employ, either to look after your children or to clean the house. She expects those in the role just to get on with the job. This may be taking things a little far – the experts' advice is to put relationships on a sounder footing, not necessarily to consign them to the deep freeze.

Fruitful relationships between increasingly over-

stretched, dual-career couples and what many term their "support staff" will depend on their bringing a few more of their workmanlike attitudes home with them.

Just as it is increasingly in vogue to talk of employees taking their interests and values to work with them, so should they bring some of what they learn in their jobs to their dealings with those who work for them at home.

As one parent said, it is simply a case of treating nannies and other "helpers" as you would want to be treated yourself.

**Tomorrow:
A better time in bed? It's all in the mind**

Dilemmas will return next week

JAN 10 1998

Tom Hudson

Tom Hudson, teacher and artist born Horden, Co Durham 3 July 1922; married 1949 Moira Marshall (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1957); 1968 Sally Smith (one son); died Bristol 27 December 1997.

It is difficult now, with the whole world supposedly looking to British art for a lead, to imagine the complacent parochialism of art education, and, by extension, the whole of the British art world, 50 years ago. Abstract Expressionism was bubbling up in New York, but drawing from classical casts was still one of the primary modes of instruction in British art schools. Heraldry was still on the curriculum.

Tom Hudson was one of a handful of individuals who smashed that costly academic world for ever, letting in a flood of international influences, breaking down the barriers between art and design and creating a climate in which British art schools were acclaimed as the best in the world. A stocky, black-bearded son of the Durham coalfield, an improvisatory socialist visionary with a touch of the streetfighter, he had a remarkable gift for inspiring and energising others.

Raised in a working-class environment with practically no exposure in art of any kind, he nonetheless acquired artistic ambitions at an early age. After active service in the Far East, he was exposed to the European avant-garde during periods of leave in Paris, and returned to disrupted studies at Sunderland School of Art with a feeling that he must do something. During a teaching year at King's College, Newcastle, and a period at the Courtauld Institute, London's grand bastion of academic art history, he began to evolve his own educational ideas, influenced by Herbert Read's 1943 book *Education through*

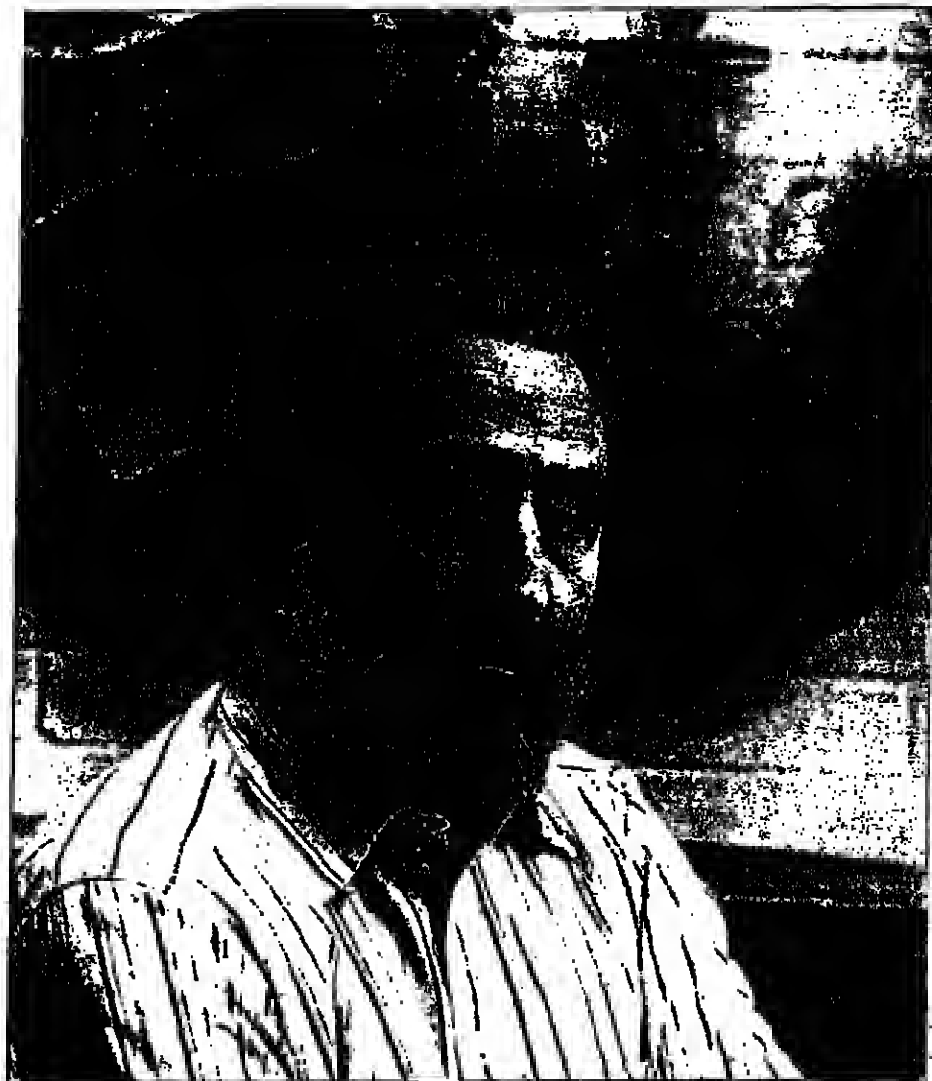
Art and the assemblage-based strategies of the Constructivist and de Stijl movements. In 1951, through Anthony Blunt's recommendation, he gained his first teaching post, at Lowestoft, a tiny provincial backwater.

His research into child art brought him into contact with Victor Pasmore, who had created a Bauhaus-inspired basic course at Newcastle. From 1954 he, Pasmore and Harry Thubron led a series of summer schools for teachers at Scarborough, where the principles of what became known as Basic Design – the stripping back of the students' preconceived ideas through exercises in form, space and colour – were evolved. What had previously been isolated developments cohered with Herbert Read's encouragement into a movement whereby a nucleus of trained teachers would convert the mass to modernist teaching methods.

In 1957 Hudson joined Thubron at Leeds, where their far-reaching experiments involving everything from heavy industrial techniques to a philosophy of the irrational introduced by the painter Alan Davie became the inspiration for young teachers all over the country. Soon the London-based educational establishment was heating a path to their door.

Many of their ideas and recommendations were absorbed by the Coldstream Committee of 1961, which introduced diplomas, radically modernising and academising the art schools, and the Summer School Council which brought in full-blown degrees in 1968.

Impatient with Leeds's exclusively fine-art orientation, Hudson became Head of Foundation Studies at Leicester, and with the aid of dynamic young artists like Michael Sandle and Terry Selch, set about creating a totally integrated system of art and design education. A revelatory exhibition of students' work, "The Visual Adventure", toured



Hudson: a socialist visionary with a touch of the streetfighter

to the Royal Festival Hall and the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1963. Hudson was invited to lecture all over the world, becoming a consultant to Unesco and adviser on art education to the Brazilian government.

Had he lived his time, one of the great London colleges might have fallen into his hands. But Hudson was more interested in his own utopias than other people's career structures. In 1964, he moved his entire staff and the pick of his students to Cardiff, where he was appointed Director of Studies with almost unlimited powers and budget. In its day, Cardiff had probably the most radical programmes anywhere,

attracting the attention of teachers from all over the world.

By the mid-Seventies, the perceived didacticism of Basic Design (a term Hudson himself never used) had become unfashionable. In most colleges, a structureless system of do-your-own-thing prevailed. When his academic freedoms were curtailed in a bureaucratic shake-up at Cardiff, Hudson fled to Vancouver with the aim of creating another ground-breaking institution. The position of Dean of Instruction, however, proved to be largely administrative, and his gritty rigour did not blend well with laid-back West Coast hedonism.

Although he exhibited his

own sculpture to some acclaim, Hudson's natural medium was teaching. He genuinely believed that, if only ordinary people could be made to understand the great artistic, scientific and intellectual achievements of the 20th century, the world's problems would be solved. To this end, while in his seventies, he made a number of television series designed to make the excitement of a creative education and his own highly personal interpretations of the modern art movements available to the man in the street. These won many of the highest awards available to such programmes in North America.

— Mark Hudson

Helen Kirkpatrick Milbank

Helen Kirkpatrick, journalist born Rochester, New York 18 October 1909; married 1954 Robbins Milbank (died 1985); died Williamsburg, Virginia 29 December 1997.

Helen Kirkpatrick, one of the first and best American war correspondents in the Second World War, was always at the forefront of the action.

She encountered little of the hostility experienced by other American women reporters in the war, her appearance as well as her expertise commanding respect. Having inherited the features of her Scottish ancestors, she was a distinguished-looking woman, with high cheek bones and bright blue eyes. As a fellow correspondent remarked, she was tall enough to overlook insults.

By the time the other American war correspondents arrived in Britain, in the wake of Pearl Harbor, Kirkpatrick had five years' experience of Europe. At the age of 30, she knew most of the leaders of Britain and France, and they respected her.

Kirkpatrick had an outstanding academic record at Smith College, one of America's leading female universities, and later at the University of Geneva. She worked in France as a stringer for the *New York Herald Tribune*, and in 1937 came to England as a freelance journalist, temporarily acting as the diplomatic correspondent of the *Sunday Times*.

Together with Victor Gordon-Lennox, of the *Daily Telegraph*, with whom she was on close terms, and with Graham Hatton, of the *Economist*, she started a weekly newsletter, the *Whitehall News*, which waged a strong campaign against the policy of appeasing the dictators. In the *House of Commons*, it was regularly read by Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden. The King of Sweden was an

other subscriber. As the men working on the newsletter were moonlighters, Kirkpatrick and her secretary were the only full-time members of the staff. Of the Munich Pact she wrote, "This truce may well induce rather than prevent war." She expanded her views in two books, *This Terrible Peace* (1938) and *Under the British Umbrella* (1939).

As war approached Kirkpatrick was engaged to the London office of the *Chicago Daily News*, Frank Knox's liberal rival of Colonel Robert McCormick's isolationist *Chicago Tribune*. As her first assignment she suggested she should interview the Duke of Windsor. Her male colleagues scoffed at the idea, knowing that the former king did not give interviews. But Kirkpatrick knew the people with whom he was staying in England and went to see them. The Duke explained that he had sworn not to give any interviews, but he saw no reason why he should not interview her. Thus her first contribution to the *Chicago Daily News* was the Duke of Windsor's interview of Helen Kirkpatrick.

Peter Knox, who was to become Roosevelt's Secretary of the Navy, explained to her, "We don't have women on the staff." She told him, "I can't change my sex. But you can change your policy." Knox did not change his policy. He simply made an exception for her. She fearlessly reported the London Blitz and in 1943 she went to Algiers and spent six months covering the North African campaign, including the surrender of the Italian fleet at Malta. After D-Day the Free French requested her presence and she became the first correspondent assigned to the headquarters of the native forces operating inside France.

She entered Paris on 25 August 1944 riding in a tank of General Leclerc's 2nd Armoured Division. In the subsequent *Le Deun* which General

de Gaulle attended in Notre Dame Cathedral she, who was the next tallest person present after de Gaulle, had to throw herself on to the floor, as he did, when snipers began shooting at them.

She went to Hitler's famous mountain retreat, "Eagle's Nest", above Berchtesgaden in Bavaria, where she swiped a frying pan from the Führer's kitchen to cook field rations. After the war she covered the war crimes trials at Nuremberg. As a roving correspondent for the *New York Post* she was one of the first to interview Jawaharlal Nehru, the prime minister of newly independent India.

Kirkpatrick's next post was as information officer for the Marshall Plan mission in Paris in the mid 1940s. Later she moved to Washington to become the Public Affairs Officer for the Western European Division of the State Department. I was then the BBC news correspondent in Washington and found her a wise and reliable source. One day, just before my radio circuit to London, it was announced that the banker Winthrop Aldrich would be the next American Ambassador to London. I rang Helen Kirkpatrick urgently. "You must know Aldrich. Can you give me in one sentence what kind of a man he is?" Without hesitation she replied, "A closed mind and an open fly." In those days that kind of remark was not acceptable on the BBC news.

Kirkpatrick next returned to academic life as the secretary to the President of Smith College and in 1954 she married Robbins Milbank, one of the trustees of Smith, a member of a prominent New England family. The Milbanks maintained homes in New Hampshire and California. She worked as a civic leader in both states. After her husband's death she settled in Williamsburg, Virginia, where she died peacefully, just after having her hair trimmed.

— Leonard Mail



Gréville: escaped from France with Utrillo and face cream

Vanda Gréville

Vanda MacEwan (Vanda Vangen), actress born London 10 January 1906; married 1930 Edmond Gréville (died 1966; one daughter; marriage dissolved); died Westgate-on-Sea, Kent 26 December 1997.

In René Clair's classic film-musical comedy *Le Million* (1931), Vanda Gréville was Vanda, the American vamp flirting with René Lefèvre's garret artist. This slender blonde opportunist is none too pleased to discover he is penniless but eagerly joins the search for his stolen jacket which carries a winning lottery ticket.

This early role would remain the highlight of Gréville's career. It had been preceded by her other proudest achievement, playing a leading role in Abel Gance's multilingual *La Fin du Monde* (1930).

Born Vanda MacEwan to a

Scottish father and Norwegian mother, she had wanted to be an actress from childhood and skipped school in Fulham to work as an extra on an Alfred Hitchcock film. While in Paris at a finishing school, she was spotted by Gance and screen-tested.

Speaking on French, she auditioned by reciting "He Fell Among Thieves" with such emotion that Gance (who understood no English) was reduced to tears. He barred his prim young discovery from taking part in the orgy scenes of *La Fin du Monde* when mankind, threatened with destruction by a comet, has a last wild fling. She was billed as Vanda Vangen, taking her mother's maiden name, and played in the English- and German-speaking versions of the film.

While seeking a career in British films (and impersonating Greta Garbo in a promotional short) she fell wildly in love with and married a half-

English avant-garde filmmaker called Edmond Gréville. He had acted in René Clair's *Sous les Toits de Paris* (1930) and introduced his new wife to Clair when he was casting *Le Million*.

Gréville himself started writing and directing feature films, and starred his wife in *Le Train des Suicidés* (1931) as a singer who has suddenly lost her voice. In Britain she co-starred as a French woman opposite Arthur Wontner in the drama *A Gentleman of Paris* (1931) but gained only a small role as a barmaid in *Ebb Tide* (1932). She found better opportunities in France, often playing English characters as in *L'Or dans la Rue* (1934) and *Le Train d'Amour* (1935), and became a society figure with a circle of friends that included Mrs Wallis Simpson.

Vanda Gréville's last film appearance was in 1939, in her husband's highly topical drama *Menaces*. She played an American, one of several foreigners

living in a hotel in the Latin Quarter of Paris as the Second World War raged.

Vanda herself caught one of the last trains to England before the fall of France, clutching only a Utrillo painting and a vast supply of her favourite face cream, while Edmond spent the war hiding in Cannes. In London, she did propaganda work for General de Gaulle, broadcasting to France and working on schemes to bring out prominent Frenchmen left behind. She would have liked to parachute into France as a special agent, but her English accent and well-known looks ruled this out.

Returning to France after the war, she worked for Unesco and as a journalist, never resuming her acting career. She came back to England when her parents' health failed and, divorced from her husband, lived quietly in Kent from the mid-1960s.

— Allen Eyles

Jack Marshall

John Gilmora Marshall, footballer and football manager born Bolton, Lancashire 29 May 1917; played for Burnley 1936-48; managed Rochdale 1958-60, Blackburn Rovers 1960-67, Sheffield Wednesday 1968-69, Bury 1969; married; died Rotherham, South Yorkshire 1 January 1998.

Before a combination of Jack Walker's millions and the inspirational guidance of Kenny Dalglish brought fame and success to Blackburn Rovers in 1995, only one man since the Second World War had given the home football club from the Lancashire textile town the faintest whiff of championship glory. His name was Jack Marshall and, whereas those modern messiahs had untold financial resources at their disposal, three decades earlier "Tolly Jack" was forced to watch every penny as he led a make-do-and-mend side to the summit of England's premier league.

"Marshall's Misfits" sat proudly, albeit briefly, atop the old First Division on Boxing Day 1963, their presence on that lofty pinnacle a tribute to the manager who had constructed an attractive, attacking team, substantially from erstwhile unconsidered talents.

It couldn't last and Rovers were overhauled subsequently by the big-city brigade from Liverpool and Manchester. The unavoidable springtime sale of their star centre-forward Fred Pickering to Everton, one of Blackburn's chief rivals, proved the final nail in that season's title aspirations, all the more poignantly since Pickering had been converted by Marshall from a plodding reserve full-back, the player's rise to prominence thus personifying his boss's shoestring shrewdness.

Thereafter, with seeming inevitability as the fortunes of most small-town clubs began to

nosedive following the abolition of the players' maximum wage limit, Rovers declined during the remainder of Marshall's Ewood Park reign and an exhilarating period of their history was over.

Jack Marshall had entered professional football as a player at Burnley in 1936 and emerged as a capable full-back before injury forced his premature retirement in 1948. He became a coach, serving Bury and Stoke City before joining Sheffield Wednesday in 1954 and assisting the national boss, Walter Winterbottom, with the England "B" team.

In 1958 Marshall stepped up to management, experiencing relegation from the Third Division with Rochdale in his first season, but performed impressively enough to take charge of the top-flight Blackburn, a club riven by internal strife, in 1960. He embarked on a sorely needed team-rebuilding job with gusto, disregarding reputations and experimenting boldly while enjoying admirable support from the classy stalwarts Ronnie Clayton and Bryan Douglas, with the result that Rovers became one of the most entertaining sides in the land.

However, the slide that followed the euphoria of 1963/64 led to demotion in 1966 and Marshall's resignation in 1967. Later that year he was appointed assistant boss of Sheffield Wednesday, shifting to the manager's seat in 1968. He worked hard at Hillsborough but left after a disappointing 1968/69, later taking over at Bury for a brief spell before spending the decade leading up to his 1979 retirement back at Blackburn as club physiotherapist.

It was fitting that Marshall should finish his footballing days at Ewood Park. As Rovers fans with long memories will confirm, when "the team that Jack built" crops up in conversation, it is not always the Walker version which is being discussed.

— Ivan Ponting

Anthea Joseph

Anthea Joseph, publicist born London 27 October 1940; died Frinton, Suffolk 27 December 1997.

When the unknown Bob Dylan arrived in Britain for the first time, it is sometimes said that his only guide was a piece of paper from Pete Seeger bearing the words, "Troubadour Folk Club, London, ask for Anthea". The story is probably apocryphal but it illustrates the pivotal role in the music business of Anthea Joseph, the tall, elegant PR specialist-come-minder.

Joseph was one of those essential functionaries without whom the music business would find it impossible to operate. Stories accrued round her and she became an improbable

combination of legend and friend to many of the biggest names who emerged from the folk boom of the Sixties and the folk rock vogue of the Seventies.

The daughter of socialist parents – her mother, Elizabeth Young, had a fair claim to be considered Britain's first film critic, at the *Daily Worker*, while her father was Noel Joseph of the *News Chronicle* – Anthea grew up in Suffolk and was inexplicably given a convent education. Reconciling the conflicting values of home and school was, she said, invaluable training for her future career.

She found her way to the Troubadour Folk Club in the mid-Fifties via a chance encounter with a trio of buskers that included Redd Sullivan. Her sometimes intimidating

presence on the club door placed her in an ideal position to meet the young lions of the Sixties folk world, like Bert Jansch and Davy Graham. Among them were some American singer-songwriters who were to become household names and she not infrequently found herself supplying emergency accommodation to these itinerants. While tales of the young Dylan sleeping on her floor would seem to be dubious, the dependence on her of many others, including Paul Simon and Tom Paxton, appears well established.

A friendship with Dylan, however, did begin at the Troubadour. In the 1965 tour documentary *Don't Look Back*, it is Anthea Joseph's dramatically anxious face Dylan is seen reassuring after a hotel glass-

breaking incident. That friendship continued into the Nineties when, leaving a Rolling Stones party that had become tedious, Joseph and Dylan spent four hours walking the rain-swept London streets.

She joined Joe Boyd's Witch-Seasons organisation in 1968, toured America with Fairport Convention in the early Seventies, worked for a while with the ICA and for CBS artists' relations (1976-86), and eventually settled into an appropriate niche with Maurice Oberstein, chairman of Polygram records. In 1991, she reduced this commitment to a part-time job to look after her ailing mother, but was away in London when her mother had a heart attack and inadvertently set fire to the house they shared in Suffolk.

She more or less gave up the music business and devoted herself to restoring the house, making only occasional forays into her old world. At the skiffle reunion at London's 100 Club and Fairport Convention's Snape Maltings gig in 1997, she appeared happy and relaxed but was concealing both physical and depressive illness as earlier years of overwork and later rural isolation took their toll.

Most people in the music business have an Anthea story and she encouraged this, volubly indulging her friend Quentin Crisp's practice of not spoiling a good story for a ha'porth of truth. Curiously it is the more improbable tales that are best attested. Wally Whyton used to tell how, visiting Nashville for the first time as a BBC presen-



Joseph: improbable tales Photograph: David Sandison

ter, he heard a brilliant American banjo picker he had never met or heard before. Introducing himself as a guitarist, Whyton said he was from England. "Oh," said the banjo picker, Bill Keith. "A guitar player from England. You must know Anthea."

— John Pilgrim

DEATHS

GRANGER: Gladys Emma, peacefully at 5 January 1998, aged 90 years. Much-loved mother of Daphne and Christopher, granny of Brian, Roger, Damaris, Rowan, Rachel and Daniel. Funeral service at St Luke's Church, Hickington, on Tuesday 13 January at 12.15pm, followed by cremation at Loughborough Crematorium. Further enquiries, J.W. Hazewood & Son, telephone 01664 812233.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

For BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, please telephone 01793 2812 or fax 01793 2818.

Birthdays

Miss Shirley Bussey, singer, 61; Mr David Bowie, singer and actor, 51; Mr Stuart Cameron, former chairman, Gallaher Ltd, 74; Mr Phil Hall, Editor, *News of the World*, 43; Lord Hardie QC, Lord Advocate, 51; Professor Stephen Hawking, mathematician, 56; Lord Hollenden, former chairman, L & R Motley, 84; Mr Andrew Hunter MP, 55; The

Right Rev Edward Knapp-Fisher, Honorary Assistant Bishop, Diocese of Chichester, 83; Professor Sir Robert May, zoologist and ecologist, 61; Air Commodore Joan Metcalfe, former Director of RAF Nursing Services, 75; Mr Ron Moody, actor, 74; Mr Kenneth Purchase MP, 59; Miss Imelda Read, MBE, 59; Professor Brian Reddaway, economic consultant in the World Bank, 85; Professor

Charles Tomlinson, Emeritus Professor of English, Bristol University, 71; Miss Galina Ulanova, former prima ballerina, 88; Professor Alan Wilson, Vice-Chancellor, Leeds University, 59.

Anniversaries

Births: William Wills Collins, novelist, 1824; Frank Nelson Doubleday,

publisher and editor, 1862; Viscount Craigavon (James Craig), Ulster statesman, 1871; Elvis Presley, rock singer, 1935; Deshae Galileo Galilei, astronomer, 1642; Paul Verlaine, poet, 1859; Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell, first Baron Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts, 1941; Richard Thuber, actor, 1948; Chou En-lai, Chinese leader, 1976. On this day: Chequers Court

was occupied by its first prime minister, David Lloyd-George, 1921; in New York, seven floors of the Empire State Building caught fire, 1963. Today is the Feast Day of St Adrian of Canterbury. St Apollinaris the Apologist, St E-bard, St Gudula, St Lucian of Beauvais, St Pega, St Severinus of Noricum Repense, St Severinus of Septempeda, St Thorfinn and St Wulstan.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Princess Royal, President, the Princess Royal of the Order of the British Empire, will attend the Queen's Birthday Party at the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Tuesday 12 January. The Princess Royal will also attend the Queen's Birthday Party at the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Tuesday 12 January. The Princess Royal will also attend the Queen's Birthday Party at the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Tuesday 12 January.

JAN 10 1998

A truth universally acknowledged? Well, not quite, dear reader



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Who opened which book with the following words? "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that every man in possession of a fortune, must be in want of a wife." Easy. So try this more problematic poser. Who opened which book with these words? "The alarm went off in the middle of her dream. She was dreaming she was dancing, not the twist or jiving - these were beginning to be considered old-fashioned at the club - but something more old-fashioned still: she was gliding to music that seemed to come out of the clouds, for there was no orchestra that she could see and no roof to the ballroom?" And here is the real clincher. The first one is unquestionably a classic, and the second one is certainly not. Why?

Just to put you out of your misery, the second quotation is from *The Bonny Dams*, one of the more recent of Catherine Cookson's bestselling romances; the first, as everyone knows, is the opening sentence of *Pride and Prejudice*, by Jane Austen. Or does everyone know? Who is

more widely read - the bespectacled Tyneside Dame, or fiction's most elegant ironist? Cookson's tale is compellingly told, with great verve, sensitivity, briskly believable dialogue, a keen sense of plot and a swift flowing prose. Whatever it is, it's not rubbish. Many ostensibly classier and more earnestly feted scribblers wish they could pull it off like her. It's good - and it's recent - but (so prolific is the Cookson word machine) it wasn't even one of the nine Cookson novels to be among the 10 fiction titles most borrowed from British libraries last year.

Now, we all know that mere popularity is not enough to merit elevation to the status of "classic" novel. But we are very much less clear about what separates *The Bonny Dams* from *Pride and Prejudice*. After all, Cookson's are great stories, well told. They seethe with universal passions and grapple with hefty social and emotional truths. Their language is neither brilliant, nor startlingly original, but neither is it thin, stilted, insubstantial or even

clichéd (in the way that, say, Jeffrey Archer's prose is). If they didn't succeed in some large measure, there is no way they would be so devotedly read by such a wide swathe of (mostly female) humanity.

So what is a classic? The old conundrum arises again because Dent, the publisher, has decided to throw together its own Everyman list of 250 classics and despatch a full set to schools. Good promo, you might say, and you'd be right. Because every list of classics includes and excludes in ways that are inevitably controversial, and controversy generates publicity. In this case many obvious "classics" have been excluded, and many questionable titles included, probably for copyright reasons. And then there is the occasional politically correct inanity: presumably the publisher wanted to include the Old Testament for cultural and literary reasons, and therefore felt it essential to throw in *Sacred Hindu Texts* and a translation of *The Quran*. Then again, entire oeuvres of poetry are quite properly included -

Coleridge, Marvell, Donne - but not a mention of some of the greatest and most important poems in our language: *The Prelude* and *In Memoriam* are bizarrely absent. But what the heck; isn't the search for exceptions and omissions half the fun, particularly since none of us are really sure what a classic is, we just know one when we see it?

Well, actually, you can say one or two things that make it quite a bit easier to identify a classic. First, it has to be a book which you can read once, and then return to and find a greater or at least different understanding. It is, in other words, a different book each time you read it - and therefore, by extension, it is a different book for every reader. Second (utterly Leavisite, this one) it has to form part of a cultural tradition - either in creating or synthesising a new way of seeing, or in handing down a legacy. On these grounds, Catherine Cookson could, at least in theory, join the pantheon of classic writers - but it's a pretty fair guess she won't.

Equally, nor will many writers of so-called "modern" classics (Dent include *Midnight's Children*, for example: well, surely that remains to be seen).

But when all's said, does it matter a whit? This is the anti-Leavis bit: no, it doesn't. The argument over what is and isn't classic is as ultimately meaningless as it is perennially entertaining. Many people will be able to identify books that are far more important to them than the classic texts. Some teachers have grumpily responded by arguing that they don't need a lot of boring old books, when they are crying out for more modern texts that young people actually want to read. Frankly, such teachers should be grateful for what they get, and encourage a few more of their pupils to experiment with the huge range of books Dent are putting on offer. For the rest - offer them something else. The important thing is that they read. Like the rest of us, in the end they will make up their own minds about what they value.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number. Fax 0171 245 2080; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

LETTERS

Cannabis trials

Sir: Dr Bill O'Neill of the British Medical Association predicts that cannabis derivatives will be available legally for medical use within a few years. ("Straw's challenge over cannabis drugs", 5 January). This would return us to the position before the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, when doctors were allowed to prescribe cannabis, most often in tincture form.

On Saturday on BBC radio the Home Secretary said there was nothing to stop those who believe cannabis has therapeutic value from applying for a Home Office licence to test the drug. There are currently three licences allowing medical research with cannabis.

However, to satisfy the Government of the efficacy of cannabis, large-scale trials are needed using a controlled dose of the drug, and this cannot be done without the involvement of the pharmaceutical companies, who have been reluctant to touch cannabis because it is in schedule 1 of the 1971 Act - a category of controlled drugs with allegedly no therapeutic value.

We face a chicken-and-egg situation: the Government will not move cannabis from schedule 1 to schedule 2 (a prescription drug with therapeutic value) until it can be shown to have a medical use. And this cannot be demonstrated to the Government's satisfaction without large-scale trials.

After reviewing the evidence - much of it admittedly small-scale or anecdotal - the BMA recognises that cannabis may have therapeutic uses for people suffering from conditions such as multiple sclerosis. The Government should now facilitate the large-scale trials that are needed.

GORDON PRENTICE MP
(Pondicherry, India)
House of Commons

Sir: In the 1940s, when I was in bed with flu, four of my six-form pupils arrived to ask how I was. They put four large, beautifully rolled joints on my bedside table and wished me well.

A day passed before I could face smoking anything, but when I did my depression eased at once, and in two days I was up. I shall always admire those boys for their daring altruism, and I am sure they are not nowadays marching their sons to the police station.

MAURICE HILL
Alicante, Spain

After devolution

Sir: Next week Parliament will take the second reading of the Scotland Bill setting up a Scottish parliament. The Bill itself seems to be carefully and sensibly drafted. But so far no attention seems to have been paid to the workings of the British Parliament after devolution.

How will English legislation be handled by English MPs to give it the same treatment as Scottish devolved legislation? Will the House of Lords be bypassed, as for Scottish devolved legislation? What machinery will be set up to ensure an acceptable allocation of the Consolidated Fund between England and Scotland? (The Scottish parliament will have no standing in that.)

Before MPs are asked to vote on the Scotland Bill they surely have the right to know, and the duty to find out, what the consequences will be for the government of the country as a whole.

In its haste to get its Bill through the Government has chosen to ignore these issues. They are fundamental for the stability and harmony of British government in the future and must be dealt with now.

SIR GERALD ELLIOT
Edinburgh

Garden for Diana

Sir: If the principle of a garden to commemorate Diana, Princess of Wales, at Kensington Palace is agreed upon (report, 30 December), we should all be spared a design that emerges from behind closed doors, and not least because of the hype that would accompany its public "launch". Instead, unless the family specifically do not want this to be the case, a popular design should be allowed to evolve through the slower process of open competition and open ideas.

There can still be a role for those working behind the

scenes. They and their experts can help set the competition parameters, they can help assess the entries and they can contribute to the garden's detailed design development, and finally they can take responsibility for the design's implementation and maintenance.

Inconvenient and awkward competitions may sometimes be but, in the absence of a clear and acceptable alternative proposal, for example to restore the original, perhaps dull, William and Mary box garden, selecting and developing a design in open competition will inject new and popular life into our valuable tradition of garden and landscape design.

Such an open process need not lead to a design of lesser quality simply by virtue of being popular, and would create a positive outlet for the creative expression of the feelings of many.

JOHN SOMERVILLE-LARGE
London W1

Cars of the future

Sir: Christopher Padley's scepticism regarding hydrogen as a fuel for cars of the future (*Letters*, 5 January) should not go unchallenged.

In the short to medium term, hybrid vehicles will provide a partial answer to the problems of congestion and pollution. In the longer term hydrogen power must be the answer. At present, safe transportation of this fuel is a problem but there are hopeful signs that research is producing answers.

Metal hydrides which can fix hydrogen are one solution. However, the most promising storage technology is being pioneered by the Northern University at Boston, Massachusetts. The claim is that a nanofibre graphite cartridge can safely store huge amounts of hydrogen at a pressure of 40 atmospheres. The gas is released by gradually reducing the pressure. One cartridge is said to be able to fuel a car for 5,000 miles and a cartridge could

be reused up to five times (*New Scientist*, 21/28 December 1996).

Considerable resource is being channelled into the development of photovoltaic cells. As their efficiency increases and unit cost is reduced, they will be the logical source of electricity to produce hydrogen via electrolysis. Car manufacturers are right to recognise that there are glittering prizes to be won in the race for zero emission cars at all points along the energy chain. Professor PETER F SMITH, *Chairman, Environment and Planning Committee, Royal Institute of British Architects, London W1*

Sir: On one page of *The Independent* of 5 January we read that the Government is refusing to support a Private Member's Bill to reduce road traffic levels, and on another we read that fare rises above inflation are being applied to a London Underground system which is falling apart.

Tony Blair once said: "We

must not demonise the car." So I suppose we shouldn't be surprised that his government is burying its head in the sand over the balance between public and private transport. Regularly we see the PM and senior ministers gliding short distances around central London in big black cars. Would it not be a good idea for Tony Blair to surprise us one day by walking or catching a bus from Downing Street to the Houses of Parliament?

NICHOLAS MURRAY
Prestige, Powys

Sir: The Snowdonia National Park authority's proposals to limit private car traffic in the park make great sense (report, 6 January). The proposals include provision of public transport, so how can these plans can be reconciled with the authority's opposition to the reconstruction of the erstwhile Welsh Highland Railway where its route passes through the park?

G GREEN
London N10

Tobacco bans

Sir: The anti-smoking law David Osborne calls "radical" ("California clears the air", 1 January), and compares with the Prohibition era, is in fact supported by a large majority of the population here, according to all the polls.

The last time California passed such a law was in 1994, when smoking in restaurants and workplaces was prohibited. At the time, pro-tobacco forces predicted Domesday for the state, and the restaurant business in particular. The fact is that now the state's economy is booming and restaurants are packed.

People will get used to the smoking ban in bars and clubs. They will go outside to light up, just as they do now when working or dining. And the odds are that ultimately, as the polls have shown with restaurants, even the majority of smokers will be glad the law was passed.

PAUL COOPERSMITH
Inverness, California

Sir: Never mind cannabis. There's a much more important issue. The number of young women who smoke tobacco is truly depressing.

The most dispiriting aspect of being in any pub or club is having to watch so many pretty girls subjecting themselves to this most protracted method of self-mutilation. It isn't clever, it isn't sophisticated and it most certainly isn't sexy.

It's time for men to speak up and declare that we'd rather not share our lives with a living, breathing abstray, no matter what other charms she may possess. Male celebrities could be leading the way. Unless we start becoming more vociferous, the fashion for smoking among women will never be broken.

PHIL SMITH
Rugby, Warwickshire

Sir: George Gombori (letter, 3 January) cites James I as an early example of a "thinking person" who was virulently anti-smoking. That monarch was also convinced that the country was in danger of being swept away on a tide of witchcraft, and was red-hot on discovering and burning alleged practitioners. It is this aspect of his thinking that lives on in the fumigations of those ever eager to seek out and destroy any social behaviour which they have deemed "foul".

DON HOWE
Liverpool

The Princess Diana Memorial Balloon, and other good uses for a lot of hot air



MILES KINGTON

The skies are becoming just as crowded with round-the-world balloonists as Mount Everest is with climbing expeditions. So for those who can't tell one shiny balloon attempt from another, here is a complete rundown of all those expeditions at present hoping to achieve the first non-stop hot air balloon trip round the world.

Chris Evans Takeover Group Basically, this is just an attempt to get there before Richard Branson does, but Chris Evans aims to make it a really fun, really wacky, really off-the-wall attempt to fly round the world, with lots of guests, lots of gags, lots of stunts, lots of video inserts and hopefully lots of hilarious fatalities. The balloon

will be bright orange and Chris will be broadcasting all his normal shows from on board.

Michael Palin "Round The Top" TV Series Balloon You thought there was no new way left for Michael Palin to go round the world? Wrong! 30,000ft up, that's how. What's amazing, as usual, is that he will be completely alone in the balloon and yet will come back with hours of perfectly shot, perfectly focused film. How do they do it? And how many new and interesting people will he "accidentally" meet up there?

Tory Party Single Currency Balloon Lord Howe, Chris Patten and

many of the great and good (old and stubborn) of the Tory party are determined to fly the flag for Europe and against William Hague by getting in a basket together and taking off round the world. As they don't know where they will land, they are taking £3,000 in 20 different currencies with them, which can also be used as ballast. "I wouldn't be surprised if 'Throw out £50 in Hungarian small change' didn't become a new music hall catchphrase!" says Lord Howe.

The Two Fat Ladies Balloon The first cookery programme to go round the world in a balloon with a side-car. The Two Fat Ladies Balloon will de-

scend here and there, and cause consternation as two fat ladies disgorge themselves from the gondola and tell the locals they're cooking it all wrong. This will be the largest balloon going round the world, as it will be carrying so much extra bulk. (Mostly flour, butter and olive oil.)

The Princess Diana Memorial Balloon Earl Spencer has announced that in response to zillions of requests, he has decided in Diana's memory to send a balloon shaped like a temple round the world so that people of all nations can worship her name as she passes. The balloon will not be manned, but people can throw in flow-

ers as it passes, preferably non-rotting. Before take-off, you may visit the site but only be able to see the balloon from half a mile away. Phone Earl Spencer for more details.

The Start The Week Balloon Melvyn Bragg is hoping to make a serious attempt to discover if, by taking a group of thinkers round the world, you can talk your way into discovering the origins of everything before you have come back. The experts in the balloon will include a geneticist, a leading novelist, a man who is giving a lecture at the Royal Geographical Society this Wednesday, and a rather pretty girl from one of the newspapers, who will be

thrown out if things get rough.

The Royal Opera House Balloon While Covent Garden is closed and being refurbished, low budget productions will be toured from this balloon. Unfortunately, the cost of installing all the governors, VIPs, corporate hospitality, etc means that it is already horrendously over-budget. Perhaps they will just take a *lieder* recital on tour after all.

The Spin Doctor Balloon Built in the shape of a Dome, this structure will take 10 spin doctors round the world, who intend to land everywhere there is adverse comment about the balloon and de-

mand that the record be put straight. The fact that I have already had two pained phone calls from Peter Mandelson since I started writing this paragraph shows how serious they are.

Lord Lichfield and the Most Beautiful Girls in The World Nice to see this veteran lot in action again. Responsible for some of the most popular garage calendars of recent years, they aim to produce the ultimate - a series of photographs taken at altitudes too high for champagne to be safely air-lifted. "We may be reduced to Chateau Margaux," quips the light-hearted Lord. "See you again in 12 months!"

JAN 10 1998

Gambling industry deregulation is shelved indefinitely

The Government has delayed plans to deregulate the casino and betting industry indefinitely. Andrew Yates reports on a move that could cost the gambling industry hundreds of millions of pounds.

The Home Office is understood to have postponed plans to introduce legislation which would have allowed casinos and betting shops to attract customers by installing more gaming machines. The proposals are unlikely to be adopted for several years at least, according to industry sources. Similarly plans to increase the number of casinos around the country by granting up to 25 new licences in provincial towns and cities are believed to have been shelved for the foreseeable future.

A question mark is also hanging over a number of other industry reforms which had been due to be introduced in a new government bill within the next few months. These include allowing punters to become a member of a casino by post. Under the current system customers are forced to apply in person.

The industry has been lobbying to be allowed some form of limited advertising. At present casinos are prevented from advertising or even listing their name in the phone book. However this measure could also be put on the back-burner along with proposals to allow customers to join a group of casinos by making just one application.

Before the election Labour Party officials told industry chiefs that it was keen to push ahead with the gaming deregulation programme that had been put in train by the Conservative administration. But since then it has dragged its feet and failed to announce the adoption of any new measures. Now there are growing fears throughout the betting industry that the Home Office is poised to make a policy U-turn.

One source said: "The government has other priorities at the moment with a heavy legislative programme. Gambling deregulation is hardly a vote winner and it will be swept under the carpet for the time being or possibly for ever."

Eighteen months ago the Tories increased the number of gaming machines permitted in casinos from two to six and fixed the maximum jackpot at £250. The idea was eventually to allow three machines per gaming table with unlimited stakes and pay outs.

Two slot machines were also permitted in betting shops with payouts of up to £10. Hopes of further machines appear to have been dashed.

The delays will have wide-scale financial repercussions for betting groups. Bruce Jones, a leisure analyst at Merrill Lynch, the City brokers, estimates that delays to gaming deregulation will cost companies millions of pounds of profits. The introduction of more gaming machines alone could have increased the profits at Stanley Leisure by a half, Stakis by a fifth and London Clubs International (LCI) by 15 per cent. "The introduction of gaming machines was the big prize for the industry," said Mr Jones.

The prospects of further delays have prompted an outcry from the betting industry yesterday. Alan Goodenough, head of LCI, one of the biggest casino operators in the country, but he said he was bitterly disappointed by the continued delays. "On the face of it the Government has a will to deregulate the industry but behind the scenes I am not quite so sure. The situation is a nonsense and is evidence of mollycoddling by a nanny state."

The delays may force casino operators such as LCI to look overseas for expansion opportunities. "The fact of the matter is that we are a mile off the international pace. This could take a lot of business overseas and this decision could damage the economy of the country and the tourist industry," said Mr Goodenough.

However the move was welcomed by anti-gambling pressure groups and by charities which have already seen revenues eroded by the National Lottery.

Even if gaming deregulation is eventually adopted, the industry will probably have to accept watered down proposals.

The Home Office said yesterday that the deregulation of the gaming industry was still under consideration but refused to comment on whether immediate plans had been shelved.



A total of 3.4 million people - 37 per cent of the taxpayers - face fines of £100 each if they do not return their forms by the end of the month, yielding the Treasury up to £340m, it emerged yesterday. Rory McGrath, the comedian (above), joined Hector the Tax Inspector in urging self-employed taxpayers to return their forms and tax payments by 31 January. Surcharges

for late payment will also begin after that date. However, Revenue officials insisted that 90 per cent of the remaining forms were due from accountants and tax agents, who always returned clients' forms at the last minute. So far 5.6 million of the 9 million returns have been completed and filed with the tax inspectors, as of 31 December.

Photograph: Christian Schwetz

Coal could face tougher pollution targets

The coal industry was dealt another severe blow yesterday after the Environment Agency called for much tougher pollution reduction targets for coal-fired power stations.

The new move would see the deadline for cuts in sulphur dioxide emissions from power stations brought forward from 2005 to 2001. The existing target, set two years ago, was for a cut of 84 per cent in sulphur emissions, compared with 1991 levels. The reduction was needed to comply with a much tougher government strategy for improving air quality.

The targets mean sulphur emissions would have fallen from 2.3 million tonnes in 1991 to 500,000 tonnes in 2001. In addition, the agency is pressing for a further reduction in emissions to just 365,000 tonnes. Almost all the sulphur dioxide emitted from the power industry is produced from coal generation.

A consultation paper released by the agency yesterday argued that pollution from coal-fired power stations had dropped much faster than expected, largely because of the "dash for gas" and the extended operating life of older Magnox nuclear stations. As a result, less electricity would be needed from the remaining coal-fired stations than was predicted when the targets were approved in March 1996.

The agency insisted the targets would not mean excessive extra costs for generators. "We have taken into account the costs for the industry. These numbers haven't just been plucked out of the air. They are realistic," said a spokesman.

However coal generating stations might have to install desulphurisation equipment, currently fitted to just two power stations, to comply with the targets. Another possibility was for generators to burn lower-sulphur coal, which could encourage the industry to buy more supplies from abroad. British coal tends to have a higher sulphur content.

The proposals put further pressure on ministers as they grapple with the coal crisis. RJB Mining, the largest coal producer, faces a drop of around half in demand from generators when long-term contracts expire at the end of March.

— Chris Godsmark

Savings proposals under fresh attack

The Government yesterday came under renewed attack over the proposed individual savings account, as the financial services industry accused it of glossing over the vital issue of protection for the very people it wants to encourage. Andrew Verity reports on complaints that the proposals would turn supermarket check-out staff into unqualified financial advisers.

The country's leading savings companies yesterday unanimously came out to warn that the individual savings account designed to replace Peps will not work for low-income savers.

They warned that regulation of the product has been so poorly thought-out that supermarket till staff would be faced with the same daunting responsibilities as qualified financial advisers.

The proposals are designed to give savers a low-cost, tax-efficient account which can hold up to £1,000 in cash, £1,000 in life insurance or £5,000 in collective investments such as unit trusts. Initially, objections focused on the proposed lifetime limit of £50,000 on contributions to the account. But the savings industry has become increasingly frightened that low-income savers will be left unprotected.

Directors of the companies said the complexity of the product was totally incompatible with unregulated selling through outlets such as Tesco. They warned that the propos-

als meant it would be sold by unqualified personnel with no protection against a bad sale.

A Treasury spokeswoman said she was unable to comment before 31 January, when consultation is due to end.

David Mossop, chief executive of Perpetual, the UK's largest Peps provider, said: "Is someone who is 16, on the cash till at Sainsbury's, going to be trained to the same level of competence as a professional adviser? Is the girl going to say, 'Invest £5,000 in equities with us and we'll give you half price on your Christmas turkey?' The idea that this thing can be sold effectively with proper consumer protection is pie in the sky."

Currently, life insurance and unit trusts are sold under strict rules which insist customers must be given best advice by qualified sales people, while cash deposits are more

lightly regulated. The Government proposes to create a hybrid product with one foot in each regime.

The industry fears that savers could be encouraged to put money on deposit at a supermarket or elsewhere, only to find they had barred themselves from investing more than £1,000 - or from putting their money in other investments with better returns. Further, the complexity of the product will sharply increase costs.

Tom King, group director of Standard Life, the country's largest mutual life insurer, said: "You could make a decision at a supermarket that will affect your ability to invest elsewhere in the long-term. When good advice would be to discuss other investments. The Government wants a low-cost product to which the public will have easy access - and this isn't it."

Asian turmoil hits HK conglomerate

The Asian markets turmoil last night looked poised to take its toll on one of the region's fastest growing finance conglomerates, Peregrine Investments Holdings. Shares in the company were suspended yesterday as it was revealed that the Zurich Group, the insurance giant, was reconsidering its offer to take a 24 per cent stake in Peregrine.

There was speculation in Hong Kong that Zurich might walk away from the \$300m (£120m) deal which could leave Peregrine in serious difficulty. The Hong Kong company has admitted to heavy losses as a result of the sharp downturn in Asian markets. It has recently been embroiled in well publicised difficulties in Indonesia, Vietnam and Burma. Peregrine is trying to sell one-third of its equity to outside investors, including Zurich.

The company promises to make an announcement on the situation today, but yesterday said only that the renegotiation with Zurich was related to "the continuing decline in South-east Asian currency markets and the recent downgrading of the credit ratings of Indonesia and South Korea."

The Asian currency meltdown gathered pace yesterday, led by a plunge in the Indonesian rupiah. The Indonesian currency crashed 15 per cent at one point in yesterday's trading before ending the day with an 11 per cent fall. There is now a con-

sensus in the region that Indonesia will emerge as the most affected of a group of economically troubled Asian nations.

This feeling gathered strength in the wake of Tuesday's budget, dubbed by analysts as the "denial budget" because it contained astonishingly unrealistic assumptions, including a projection of 4 per cent economic growth and an exchange rate against the US dollar of 4,000 rupiah. The rupiah stood at 8,100 to the dollar yesterday.

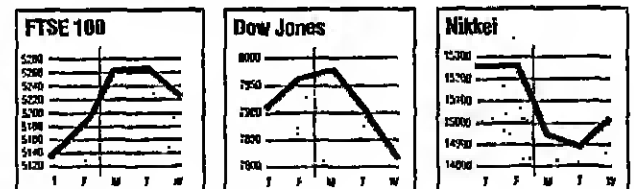
The fear now is that the Indonesian government will simply declare a debt moratorium, turning its back on loan repayments with the same disregard it has shown for adherence to the terms of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) rescue package. The IMF, in turn, is reported to be looking again at the release of further funds to Indonesia.

The close connections between President Suharto's family and many of the private Indonesian companies most likely to default, adds to the complications of achieving the kind of sweeping reforms necessary to revive the economy.

On the other hand, the IMF's remedies effectively call for mass unemployment and corporate closures which could trigger social unrest, symptoms already bubbling to the surface with an outbreak of rioting in Bandung, one of the countries big cities.

— Stephen Vines

STOCK MARKETS



Indices	Close	Change	Change%	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield%
FTSE 100	5224.10	-40.30	-0.77	5367.30	4036.90	3.24
FTSE 250	4868.10	70.20	0.21	4963.80	4364.20	3.20
FTSE 350	2512.10	-14.80	-0.59	2570.50	2013.40	3.23
FTSE All Share	2451.46	-13.26	-0.54	2507.68	1996.91	3.21
FTSE SmallCap	2638.40	3.10	0.13	2417.40	2165.10	3.00
FTSE Technology	1271.80	0.30	0.02	1346.50	1225.20	3.26
FTSE AIM	991.40	-7.60	-0.76	1138.00	965.90	1.06
Dow Jones	7812.34	-83.91	-1.19	8299.03	6556.78	1.75
Nikkei	15026.17	131.77	0.89	20910.79	14498.21	1.03
Hong Kong	9538.61	-596.90	-6.15	16820.31	8775.88	4.45
Dax	4391.54	38.91	0.89	4459.89	2875.06	1.65

INTEREST RATES



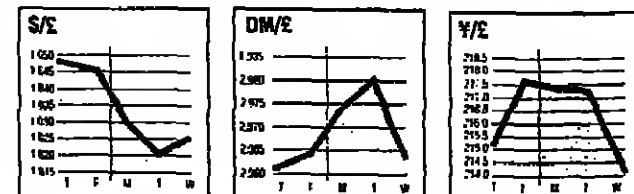
Money Market Rates	3 month	1 yr	5 yr	10 yr	1 yr	5 yr	10 yr
UK	7.51	1.02	7.56	6.51	1.69	6.05	1.82
US	5.69	0.13	5.75	0.14	5.82	1.02	5.77
Japan	0.82	0.31	0.76	0.18	1.86	-0.90	2.49
Germany	3.61	0.46	3.92	0.67	5.20	-0.76	5.75

Bond Yields	10 yr	5 yr	1 yr	3 mo
UK	6.05	1.69	1.02	7.51
US	5.77	1.02	0.13	5.69
Japan	2.49	-0.90	0.31	0.82
Germany	5.75	-0.76	0.46	3.61

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Falls
Albright and WII 155.50	Schroders 1700.00-110.00
Gallagher Gro 356.50	HSBC 1493.00-39.00
Booker 353.50	HSBC 275
JBA Hedges 1112.50	Orange 251

CURRENCIES



Pound	Change	Dollar	Change
Dollar 1.6270	-0.036	Sterling 0.6146	+0.022
D-Mark 2.9826	-1.61pt	D-Mark 1.8224	-0.09pt
Yen 214.09	-44.46	Yen 131.70	-22.14
£ Index 104.90	-0.20	£ Index 110.60	+0.20

OTHER INDICATORS

Com	Change	Index	Change
Brent Oil (\$)	15.00	113.90	3.70
Gold (\$)	282.95	358.85	3.70
Silver (\$)	6.10	4.88	7.25

www.bloomberg.com source: Bloomberg

Complaints prompt Stock Exchange to think again on membership of IT index

The Stock Exchange is to reconsider the membership of its new information technology index following complaints from companies who have been left out. At least three firms are writing to FTSE International, the agency which administers the Exchange indices, to argue for their inclusion in the sector.

Meanwhile, the committee which considers sector classifications is to review the definition of the sector when it next meets in March. The current definition includes IT consultants and software distributors, but leaves out manufacturers of computer hardware. This means that

Pison - the hand-held computer maker which is arguably Britain's most successful hi-tech company - is not part of the index.

This has surprised investors, since the original reason for setting up the sector was to help international investors spot British high-tech firms. "I don't think it's been terribly well thought through," one observer remarked.

Videologic, the computer chip designer which has also been excluded from the index, plans to press its case with FTSE International. "The key is to include companies who create intellectual property," said the finance director, Trevor

Selby. "We think we're prime candidates."

Other companies which want to be part of the index are computer memory distributors Ideal Hardware and Datronch. Advisers to both companies are planning to submit applications for them to join. FTSE International admits that the sector was created in a hurry. "We wanted to do something before the end of the year," a spokesman said. Due to the pressure that adjustments put on financial information providers, sectors are only reviewed once a year.

FTSE International is keen to change the definition of the sector to include firms like Pison.

But it wants to do so without including manufacturers which assemble imported components. "The definition needs to be kept fairly tight," the spokesman said. Even though share prices in the index's members have risen sharply since its creation was announced, not all companies are desperate to join. The IT recruitment firm CRJ, which was also left out, is dismissive.

Karl Chapman, the chief executive, said: "At the end of the day your share price is a function of profits and cash flow, not the stock market sector you're in."

— Peter Thal Larsen

OUTLOOK
WHY THE GOLD
WATCHING BON
GETTING RACING
BR AN RANCE
COMPANIES AND
NOTHER YEAR OF
LEADERSHIP THE R

City predicti
ates desp

Bank of England's
etary Policy
committee started its
meeting of the new
yesterday, a new
showed one part
is economy,
was, is still booming,
in City experts
to the view that
Bank would save the
rise in interest
until February.
Economics
in reports.

Guinness to
350m busi
park in Lon

Courtauld's settle

ON WHY THE GOLD PRICE
ISN'T FALLING. BONUS
CUTTING AMONG
LIFE-ASSURANCE
COMPANIES. AND
ANOTHER YEAR OF
TURMOIL FOR THE RECS

As it does too in countries where banks have come to be seen as unsafe places to

Nor would it be right to view its present, relatively low, dollar price as a clear deflationary signal. Gold is quite unlike most other commodities. Its purpose is often a purely decorative one. Elsewhere

Lamentably, it doesn't work like that. Throughout most of the 1990s overall rates of return, both on equities and bonds have been falling. It's our old friend deflation once more. Most life companies have desperately been trying to ignore this painful reality, digging into their free assets in an effort to keep bonuses high so as better to market their life policies. Then last year, there was a particularly big drop in returns on equities, exacerbated by the removal of the

As even the industry's most die hard supporters concede, however, at a time when bonuses are being cut, it is hard to make people understand these merits. There will always be a sizeable market for with profits life assurance, but the latest round of bonus cuts will do nothing to enhance the already dented reputation of this opaque and sometimes fuddy duddy old industry.

All in all, the whole thing looks like a pretty unwelcome Christmas present for the DTI, which is already under intense pressure from Ed Wallis at PowerGen to let generators buy RECs. With pressure now mounting from the US, it is time for the government to make some difficult decisions. The sooner the DTI outlines its vision for the industry the better for all. The industry will be better able to judge whether consolidation makes commercial sense and regulators will be better placed to decide whether customers would be harmed by it. Get a move on Margaret Beckett.

As the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee started its first meeting of the new year yesterday, a new survey showed one part of the economy, services, is still booming. But City experts stuck to the view that the Bank would save the next rise in interest rates until February. Diane Coyle, Economics Editor, reports.

In sharp contrast to the subdued state of manufacturing, the service industries continued to boom last month. Output and orders were up, as were employment and prices charged, and the expansion would have been even faster but for chronic shortages of skilled labour.

Even so, the signs of strength in the service industries are not expected to persuade the Monetary Policy Committee to raise the cost of borrowing today, at the end of its two-day meeting. On the other hand, the Bank is thought likely to make that move next month unless official figures signal meanwhile that a decisive slowdown in growth is under way.

strongest growth in business services. Their backlog of unfinished work increased for the third month running.

Employment in services climbed for the 15th consecutive month as firms tried to increase their capacity to meet the demand. The report commented: "Firms widely reported skill shortages as a constraint to further expanding capacity."

Not surprisingly, the pressure on wages and salaries, also up for the 18th month in

Another natural result was that the respondents reported a big improvement in their optimism about future business. More than two-thirds said they expected their level of business to increase during the next 12 months, while only 8 per cent expected growth to slow.

Peter Thomson, director general of the CIPS, said: "Growth in the service sector still remains strong enough to generate concerns over capacity constraints."

In a new twist in a three-year-old investigation, the Justice Department said yesterday that DNA Plant Technology Corp. of California had been formally charged because of its involvement in a tobacco company's attempts to raise tobacco plants with unusually high nicotine yields on farms in Brazil. Offi-

Government investigators have long suspected that B&W was attempting between 1984 and 1991 to develop the new plants in the hope of using them to manipulate nicotine levels — and therefore addiction rates — in the US market. Any such project could not legally have been undertaken on American soil.

The announcement comes as a further embarrassment to Kentucky-based B&W as the entire industry awaits congressional action later this year on the \$368bn (£224bn) tobacco health-costs settlement negotiated during 1997 between the cigarette companies and attorneys-general of some 30 US states.

Officials said that when evidence first surfaced about the Brazilian project, DNA Plant Technology lied to the Food and Drug Administration in 1994 about the contract that had been signed between itself and Brown & Williamson as well as about the export of the tobacco seeds.

—David Osborne

The proposals also envisage a new underground and bus interchange station to link the existing Piccadilly and Central lines and local buses. While a new road access off the A40 is also planned. Construction work is expected to start in

In a separate move, Guinness divulged plans for a new

Tony Greener: Orchestrating a transformation of Guinness

Sponsorship deals Guinness has entered into include the

comedy and sport."

— Andrew Yates

Yesterday the two companies agreed to cross-license each other on a royalty-free basis on all products related to

The company described the agreement as "an honourable

colour intensity and low shrinkage during cleaning.

Courtauld's shares rise as much as 3p to 295p in early trading before easing back to 291p.

– Nigel Cope |

[illegible]

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY ANDREW YATES

IT euphoria is unlikely to last

December was a great month for information technology (IT) stocks. When the Stock Exchange announced plans to give Britain's booming IT sector its own index, investors piled in. In five weeks shares in three of the sector's largest constituents - Sema, CMG and Logica - have all risen by more than 15 per cent. This euphoria looks unlikely to last. After all, the rise is down to investors adjusting their holdings to the sector. Currently a subdivision of the catch-all Support Services group, IT stocks will have their own sector once their combined value is large enough - probably at the end of this year. That means institutional investors need an exposure to the stocks, and judging by the recent scramble most were horribly underweight. The largest, most liquid stocks have enjoyed the biggest rises.

But valuations are looking stretched. CMG currently trades on a multiple of 36 times 1998 earnings, while Sema gets a multiple of 34. FI Group, buoyed by its recent Indian acquisition, is awarded an even more fancy rating. Even taking into account phenomenal growth, fuelled by the millennium bomb and the introduction of a single currency, this looks overdone.

The problem is that IT consultants' growth is limited by how much staff they can bring in, and recruitment is getting desperate. Schemes to guarantee anyone who passes a degree course a job, or to recruit unskilled workers and train them, may plug the gap for a while. Sooner or later, however, firms will have to start delaying contracts because they can't get the staff. If anything, these pressures will be worse this year than last summer, when staff shortages prompted Logica to issue a profit warning.

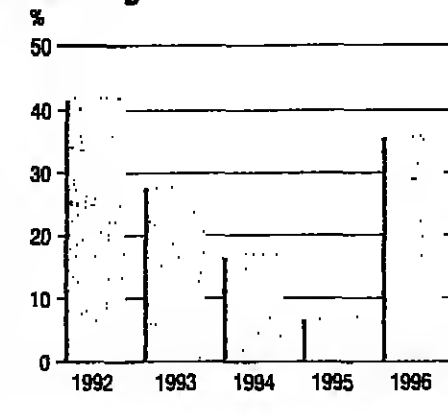
Perhaps the software companies like Misy's, Sage and Micro Focus offer better value? True, ratings are marginally more modest and growth not so vulnerable to staff factors. Even so, p/e multiples in the mid-20s hardly offer much scope for outperformance. Bargain-hunting investors may prefer to sniff out some of the sector's

AG Barr: At a glance

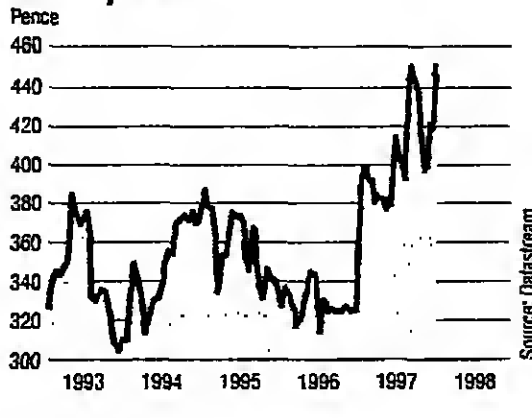
Market value: £88.2m, share price 451p (+12.5p)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Five-year record					
Turnover (£m)	87.9	88.0	101.2	103.1	110.3
Pre-tax profits (£m)	4.1	6.6	4.6	5.0	10.8
Earnings per share (p)	15.5	23.8	15.3	18.4	38.5
Dividends per share (p)	6.5	7.8	8.2	8.65	11

Gearing



Share price



smaller constituents, who have seen less of a rise and offer better value. There is also value to be had elsewhere in Support Services, which is one of our favoured sectors for 1998. But having welcomed the creation of an IT sector, investors should probably now avoid it.

AG Barr success story continues

AG Barr is hardly the most forthcoming of companies when it comes to releasing financial information. The Glasgow-based drinks group, which makes Irn-Bru, Tizer and Orangina, releases only a single page of financial statistics to accompany its results and makes investors wait for the annual report for any more.

Still, given the recent performance of the shares there are unlikely to be any complaints. The stock has jumped from 320p at the beginning of last year to 451p, up another 12.5p yesterday. And the good news continued yesterday with a thumping set of figures for the 12 months to 25 October.

In effect they were a second set of interim as the company is changing its year end. They showed a huge jump in pre-tax profits from £5m to £10.8m on turnover up just 7 per cent, beating all analysts' forecast by some margin.

The main reasons for the increase were lower sugar prices helped by the strong pound and halving of the price of plastic bottles used in manufacture over the last 18 months. A further £1m in costs savings came from the benefits of operating from the new factory in Cumbernauld in Scotland. The good news on costs is that plastic bottle

and sugar prices are still low and the company feels there is scope for more efficiency gains at the new plant as it beds down.

It wasn't just a cost story. UK sales of AG Barr's own brands rose 7.5 per cent, although sales growth has slowed in recent weeks.

The key to AG Barr's longer term success is its invasion of the English market. Its Irn-Bru brand has a huge market share in Scotland but is only just starting to make progress south of the border.

Another potential problem is the recent decision by Pernod-Ricard to sell Orangina to Coca-Cola. However, as AG Barr has a franchise agreement to bottle and distribute the brand in Britain until December 2002 this issue is five years away.

On Greig Middleton's 15-month

forecast of £11.3m, the shares trade on a forward rating of 11. AG Barr remains a minnow in a market dominated by giants but at these levels the shares look decent value.

Scope for growth at Gartland

Tony Gartland, the chairman, and his management team which built up FKI, the engineer, have created another profitable niche at Gartland. Whalley & Barker by taking big stakes in small companies and building them up for flotation or sale. The company reported another 63 per cent increase in pre-tax profit to £20.7m in the year to the end of October.

However, the figures failed to please the market. Almost half the profits last year came from the disposal of Quadratic, which makes coin counting equipment, and the flotation of Aquarius, the bathrooms and furniture group, both of which took place in the first half of the year. Profits in the second six months were disappointing, falling 12 per cent to £5m, causing the shares to fall 3.5p to 119p yesterday.

That reaction seems harsh. There is still scope for strong growth, in the UK and especially the US. This year Mr Gartland is predicting 15 acquisitions, two flotations including the recruitment business, Quantica, and the probable sale of Independent Parts Group, the quoted motor parts distributor, now a £33m business in which GVB has a 27 per cent stake. The new smaller company division, Crossley House Ventures, also announced its first acquisition yesterday, paying £3.6m in cash and shares for Vaire Terracotta.

There are risks. Profits are lumpy and the group's success hinges on its deal-making ability. A stock market downturn could create bargains but make fit profits from disposals harder to generate. Analysts forecast pre-tax profits of £22.1m, putting the shares on a prospective p/e of just 6. With management owning most of the company stock it can be difficult to come buy but, if you can get hold of them, the shares are worth a punt.

Car sales rise to give third best year on record

Car sales rose by 7.2 per cent to 2.17 million during 1997, the third best year on record, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders confirmed yesterday. During December registrations rose by 8.3 per cent, to 84,634, though the share of the market taken by British made cars during the month slumped from 42 per cent to 35 per cent. It meant that imports accounted for 66 per cent of the market during 1997, a rise of 4 per cent on the previous year.

Ford took the top three sales slots last year, with the Fiesta in first place, though the group's market share dropped from 19.6 per cent to 18.3 per cent. Rover's market share was 10.01 per cent, down 1 per cent on 1996.

Amstrad man joins BDB

British Digital Broadcasting (BDB), the digital terrestrial television joint venture between Carlton Communications and Granada Group, has appointed Amstrad's former commercial director, Anthony Schill, as a director. BDB said Mr Schill will have marketing and general management responsibilities as the venture moves towards launch in the autumn. Analysts said Mr Schill was instrumental in the start-up of Amstrad's satellite television business across Europe and initiated the development of its digital set-top box technology.

US finance houses ahead

Two leading US finance houses, Morgan Stanley Dean Witter and Lehman Brothers, have reported record fourth-quarter earnings, led by increasing profits from investment banking. Their shares declined, though, as US stocks dropped and analysts questioned if earnings would decline in the months ahead.

Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, the biggest US securities firm in terms of equity capital, said earnings in the three months to November rose 79 per cent to a record \$810m, or \$1.33 a share. That exceeded analysts' average forecast of \$1.03 a fully diluted share. Lehman Brothers' fourth-quarter net income rose 46 per cent to \$185m, or \$1.30 a share, beating the average forecast of \$1.04 a share.

Shell and Ernst link up

Shell, the oil giant, is to create 400 jobs in Glasgow in a joint venture with accountants Ernst & Young. The new business, called Tasoo Europe, will offer specialist accountancy services to companies, though initially it will provide support solely for Shell's European operations. The Scottish Office said the new jobs, in the Glasgow area, would be created in the next three years.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Barclays Bank (F)	55.01m (58.83m)	20.66m (12.66m)	18.0p (11.07p)	2.4p (0.22p)
AG Barr (F)	110.3m (103.1m)	10.8m (5.04m)	38.5p (18.48p)	11.0p (8.65p)
Dimension Holdings (F)	21.56m (24.71m)	13.79m (8.30m)	14.2p (12.0p)	4.8p (4.0p)
Jersey Electricity (F)	21.56m (24.71m)	5.36m (4.06m)	2.80p (2.08p)	48.0p (43.0p)

(F) = Final (I) = Interim † EPS & pre-tax exceptional ‡ Dividend to be paid as a FID

THE INDEPENDENT

INDEPENDENT
ON SUNDAY

Everyday in any one of six Conran restaurants

The Independent and Independent on Sunday in association with Terence Conran are delighted to offer readers the opportunity to enjoy lunch or early evening supper at six of London's top restaurants anyday throughout January and February for £10

From Monday January 5th until Saturday February 28th, 6 Conran Restaurants are exclusively offering readers of The Independent and Independent on Sunday a two course lunch or early evening supper for just £10. In addition, readers can take advantage of further special offers throughout the evening at a number of the restaurants, details of which we shall publish over the course of the promotion.

How to Book

To participate in the offer simply collect one token (tokens will be printed every day until Saturday February 28th) and then telephone the restaurant of your choice quoting the Independent offer. On your arrival at the restaurant you must present your token in order to qualify for the offer. Each token is valid for a complete table booking. The tokens will be valid for one week only, and will be dated accordingly. To continue to participate in the offer, simply collect a token from the week in which you wish to dine. Pre-booking is essential and all bookings are subject to availability.

A special discount is available on selected items in the Bluebird and Le Pont de la Tour shops on presentation of the token.

Terence Conran, widely recognised as the UK's leading restaurateur has played a significant role in changing the way we eat out. He has created 11 unique restaurants, and this year will open two more in London and one in Paris.

BLUEBIRD

BLUE
PRINT
CAFÉ

LE PONT DE LA
TOUR

MOZZO

QUAGLINO'S

ZINC
BAR & GRILL



Bluebird is an Epicurean experience for lovers of food and drink a large restaurant and bar, together with a food market, chef shop, traiteur, café and luxurious dining club. Since opening last year, it has become a popular choice for those who want to enjoy good food and wine in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. The menu combines the best classic and contemporary flavours and techniques, and readers can enjoy dishes from the grill, rotisserie and wood-fired oven. Lunch 12pm-3pm, Early evening supper 6pm-7pm.

Blue Print Café is a favourite destination for many in the city. Admired for its spectacular view, good food and relaxed atmosphere, the restaurant looks out over the Thames and Tower Bridge. Blue Print's food is simple and light reflecting influences from around the globe and the menu changes frequently to take advantage of seasonal produce. New for 1998, Blue Print Café have introduced a set lunch menu which Independent readers can try at the special price of £10 for two courses. Also available early evening is a selection of great Spanish food and rustic wine for £10. Lunch 12noon-3pm, Early evening supper 6pm-7pm.

Le Pont de la Tour is a unique dining experience overlooking the River Thames and is situated by one of the most famous bridges in the world - it's namesake, Tower Bridge. The entire complex includes an elegant restaurant, lively bar & grill and series of splendid shops. At the Bar & Grill, the menu is a mix of regional French, Irish, British and Italian dishes in simple, generous style. For Independent readers the chef has created a new set menu (£10 for two courses or £14.50 for three courses) full of classic Bar & Grill dishes. Lunch 12pm-3pm, Early evening supper 6pm-7pm.

Mozzo is a unique dining experience overlooking the River Thames and is situated by one of the most famous bridges in the world - it's namesake, Tower Bridge. The entire complex includes an elegant restaurant, lively bar & grill and series of splendid shops. At the Bar & Grill, the menu is a mix of regional French, Irish, British and Italian dishes in simple, generous style. For Independent readers the chef has created a new set menu (£10 for two courses or £14.50 for three courses) full of classic Bar & Grill dishes. Lunch 12pm-3pm, Early evening supper 6pm-7pm.

Quaglino's is a unique dining experience overlooking the River Thames and is situated by one of the most famous bridges in the world - it's namesake, Tower Bridge. The entire complex includes an elegant restaurant, lively bar & grill and series of splendid shops. At the Bar & Grill, the menu is a mix of regional French, Irish, British and Italian dishes in simple, generous style. For Independent readers the chef has created a new set menu (£10 for two courses or £14.50 for three courses) full of classic Bar & Grill dishes. Lunch 12pm-3pm, Early evening supper 6pm-7pm.

Zinc Bar & Grill is a lively and informal restaurant and bar, in the heart of London's West End. Just seconds away from the hustle and bustle of Regent Street, Zinc Bar & Grill provides an oasis from the West End frenzy, a place to meet friends for a quick drink, a light lunch or a relaxed dinner. The menu is simple and reasonably priced with the majority of dishes cooked on the grill and rotisserie, on view to restaurant customers. Exclusively at Zinc, readers will be able to enjoy three courses for just £10 between 12 noon and 7pm.

*Closed from 6pm on Sunday

Terms and conditions: To participate in the offer simply telephone the restaurant of your choice direct (from those listed above) to make your table reservation, identifying yourself as an Independent diner. On arrival at the restaurant you should present your correctly dated token to qualify for the promotion. Tokens are only valid for the dates printed. You must be at least 18 years old to participate in the promotion. Pre-booking is essential and all bookings are subject to availability. Diners will not be able to participate in the promotion if they have not made a prior reservation. The offer entitles the Independent diner and all members of their booking to a two course lunch or early evening supper (see Terms) at the restaurant of their choice. The discount is the Bluebird / Le Pont de la Tour shops on presentation of the token. Price includes one side order against a specially prepared menu. The discount is the Bluebird / Le Pont de la Tour shops on presentation of the token. The offer is exclusive to Independent readers and this offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer and is non-transferable. Conran Restaurants Ltd trading terms and conditions apply. Promoter: The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5AR

THE INDEPENDENT INDEPENDENT

Valid between Monday January 5th and Friday January 9th

Name _____

Address _____

This voucher entitles the holder and all members of their booking to participate in The Independent/Conran Restaurants £10 meal offer.

Mineral groups suffer as metal prices take a pounding

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

After the oil spill it was the turn of mineral groups to take a pounding. Rio Tinto and Biliton were in the front line, reflecting the seemingly continuous slump in metal prices.

With little sign of any metals revival Rio fell a further 37p to 736p and Biliton 75p to 157p. Rio touched 1,099p last summer; Biliton was floated at 230p in July and subsequently hit 249p.

There were casualties among the smaller fry with Avon Mining off 4p at 94p - it touched 241p last year - and Reunion, down from 138p, easing 6p to 85p.

Oil staged something of a revival although bearish comments continued to swirl around, with the investment house Henderson Crosthwaite cutting this year's crude price projection from \$19 a barrel to \$17.5. Positive noises from Lehman Brothers and Morgan Stanley lifted British Petroleum

13p to 778p. However Enterprise Oil, Lasso and Shell remained under pressure.

In busy trading Footsie suffered its first fall of the year, off 40.3 points at 5,224.1. Supporting shares were more positive.

Asda was the best performing blue chip, rekindling hopes it still hankers for a chance to strike at its hard-pressed rival Sainsbury. The shares rose 6.25p to 185.75p, a year's high, with Sainsbury managing a 3.5p gain to 345.5p.

Northern Rock, the building society turned bank, was knocked off its pedestal by comments it is the most expensive banking share in Europe and was 15p cent overvalued. SBC Warburg offered to take profits advice. Still, the setback was confined to 4.5p at 614p as buyers moved in when the price retreated 12p.

Renam, the packaging and paper group, had an uncomfortable time as Merrill Lynch

lowered its share rating to neutral and cut this year's profit forecast from £20m to £20.5m.

With a 7.6 million trade at 270p adding to their woes, the shares fell to 275p. In 1995 the price reached 521p.

Merrill gave Securic a friendly push with a buy recommendation; the price rose 13p to 313.5p.

Hambro Countrywide, the estate agent, was the hot takeover tip of the day. The shares rebounded 11p to 115.5p as stories surfaced that the 52 per cent owned by Hambros, the merchant bank being acquired by Societe Generale, could be on the move.

Hambros has said that as part of its break-up its Countrywide stake will be distributed to its shareholders. Such a scheme could take six months to reach fruition and the yarn flowing around suggested an impatient bidder was seeking to short-cut the

process. Hambros put on 3p to 255.5p.

Chemicals attracted attention. Albright & Wilson gained 9.5p to 155.5p on takeover talk and Hickson International was given a 7p speculative boost to 73p. Settlement of Courtaulds' long-running dispute over Lyocell fibre left the shares 1.5p down at 290p.

General Electric Co fell 7.5p to 394.5p as it started its £300m share buy-back and ABN Amro

Hoare Govett was said to be keen on the shares. National Grid, 9p higher at 313p, reflected buying for the special dividend payment.

Henderson repeated its buy advice on Rank, off 3.5p to 344.5p, it has turned cautious on Northern Foods, down 1.5p to 366.5p.

Booker, the food group, continued to draw comfort from Warburg support, up 2p to 353.5p.

Lonka, the fledgling telephone group, held at 303p as Warburg, the bank behind the heavily criticised 390p flotation, acquired 343,000 shares, lifting its stake to 4.33 per cent.

A bullish trading statement from Electronic Bookings added 1.25p at 49.75p. The video retailer achieved 70 per cent sales growth over Christmas. But caution from Dawson, the newspaper distributor, shredded the price 39p to 176p.

Jacquies Vert, the troubled fashion group, returned from a two-month suspension at 22.5p up 1p.

Triplex Lloyd, the engineer, held at 272.5p as the bidder Doncaster, a US group, picked up a 6 per cent stake.

Zetters, the bingo and pools group, hardened 7p to 138.5p after admitting bid approaches had developed into talks although they were "of a very preliminary nature".

Verity, with a water-thin sound system, rose 3.75p to 73p; speculation intensified it was on the verge of clinching significant licensing deals. The group is taking part in a trade show at Los Vegas and, according to rumour, has received dozens of enquiries from hopeful licensees.

Black, the electronic group, made further headway on bid hopes, up 22.5p to 33p. Printer Fairway, which has signalled bid interest, rose another 3p to 68.5p.

Jacquies Vert, the troubled fashion group, returned from a two-month suspension at 22.5p up 1p.

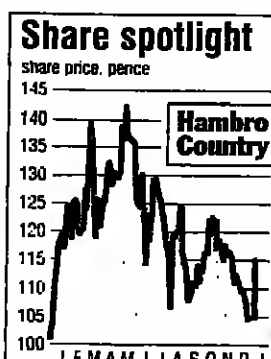
Black Arrow, the office furniture group, is thought to be trading well. The shares, up 11.5p, are riding at a 114p peak. In some quarters there is a sneaking suspicion the long rumoured take over bid could be near.

TAKING STOCK

From 84.5p last month Fibernet, a blue-sky digital network group, has risen to 143.5p. NatWest Securities contributed to the advance. The analyst Mike Williams is enthusiastic about the fledgling group and sees its national network making £17m in 1999. Like many AIM companies Fibernet failed to live up to flotation hopes. Before the setback the shares were 184.5p.

Hopes Nion's year's figures will be a shade firmer than indicated in November's profits warning lifted the shares 16.5p to 155p. The group said profits would be around £6.5m against hopes of £8m. Last spring the shares were more than 400p.

Black Arrow, the office furniture group, is thought to be trading well. The shares, up 11.5p, are riding at a 114p peak. In some quarters there is a sneaking suspicion the long rumoured take over bid could be near.



52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Alcoholic Beverages								
52 480	Adnoca	36.50	7.50	4.0	0.1	800		
52 480	Budweiser	70.00	4.0	0.1	800			
52 480	Carlsberg	50.00	2.50	0.1	800			
52 480	Guinness	95.00	1.0	0.1	800			
52 480	Heineken	90.00	1.0	0.1	800			
52 480	Miller	100.00	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Banks, Merchant								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Banks, Retail								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Breweries Pubs & Rest								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Building/Construction								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Chemicals								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Engineering								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Food								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Health Care								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Household Goods								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Insurance								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Investment Trusts								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Media								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Pharmaceuticals								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Property								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Support Services								
52 270	Barclays	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Scotland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Ireland	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Wales	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Cyprus	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			
52 270	Bank of Greece	36.50	1.0	0.1	800			

52 week									
High	95.00	-	5.9	9.6	809	34	2.8	148	2.8
Low	140.50	-	3.4	8.6	1694	36	2.9	29	2.9
Volume	87.50	-	6.0	8.7	6100	1480	30	90	30
Security	85.00	-	7.1	7.3	3872	88	9.0	94	9.0
Interest	222.50	-	8.1	9.0	6781	502	33	33	502
Price	73.00	-	2.9	5.7	674	245	8.0	8.0	245
Price	445.00	-7.00	2.3	26.3	608	206	6.1	6.1	206
Price	157.00	-	4.1	20.2	609	171	22.0	22.0	171
Price	94.00	-	7.8	8.4	440	258	8.0	8.0	258
Price	220.00	-	7.1	-	360	00	6.3	6.3	00
Price	377.50	-	6.0	9.3	7582				

Don't take the slowdown story for granted just yet



KEVIN GARDINER
ON REASONS
TO BE CHEERFUL

The British forecasting fraternity is unanimous in predicting that the UK economy will slow in 1998. Pessimists expect growth of less than 2 per cent, which—given the likely strength of the economy as the year begins—implies near-recessionary conditions for much of the year.

Optimists, such as the Morgan Stanley team, look for growth of a little more than 3 per cent, a relatively modest deceleration from 1997's likely 3.5 per cent. But all of the 54 frequent forecasters surveyed by Consensus Economics in early December expect growth to slow, as do less frequent forecasters such as the Treasury, the Bank of England, the OECD and the IMF.

Such uniformity is rare—and unsettling. Grinchev Marx didn't want to belong to a club that would have him as a member, and in the realm of investment analysis, his instincts were just as sound. The economic risks in 1998 are surely not as one-sided as these collective forecasts suggest.

There are of course good, objective arguments for expecting the economy to slow in the year ahead. Export growth seems likely to wilt as the strong pound and Asian retrenchment bite. The increases in mortgage rates will make themselves felt more fully, and disinflationary

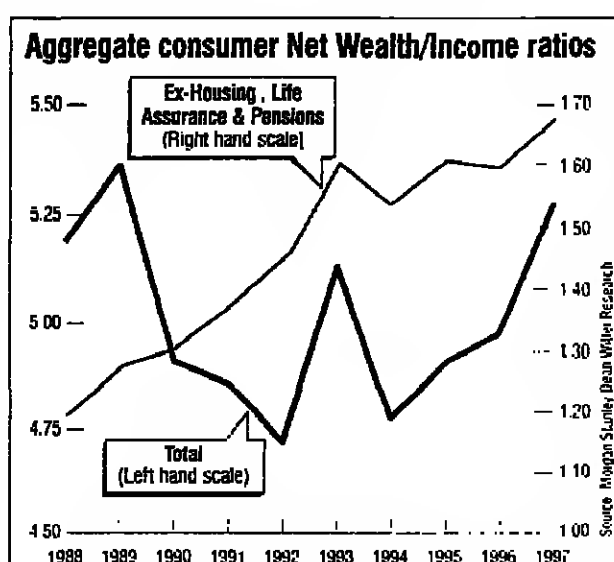
come growth will also suffer from the absence of last year's tax cuts, and from the small tax increases announced in July's Budget. The building society windfalls must also eventually fade into the rear-view mirror. But a solid argument is no guarantee of an accurate forecast: our understanding of the forces which drive the economy is much less precise than our carefully articulated models and spreadsheets. A resurgence in consumer confidence, for example, could yet blow the slowdown scenario out of the water. And there are indeed reasons for consumers to be cheerful.

There has been much talk of a reformed UK consumer, cowed by the twin threats of excessive past borrowing and job insecurity. But in reality, the household balance sheet is not fragile, in aggregate, but dauntingly strong, while job security may actually be improving.

Consumer debt rose five-fold between 1980 and 1990, more than twice as quickly as incomes. And at no time since 1990 has the amount of debt fallen: it has continued to rise, though a little less rapidly than income. However, even after mortgage rates have risen by a fifth in the last year, the aggregate interest bill is still running at levels, relative to incomes, roughly half as high as those which in 1990 pushed the economy into recession.

Moreover, much of the surge in borrowing during the 1980s was in effect a one-off response to the ending of credit and mortgage rationing, and to the sale of council houses: viewed in this context, and with the adjustment behind us, it looks less alarming.

Meanwhile, consumer assets—the forgotten side of the balance sheet—amount to three-and-a-half trillion pounds, compared to total borrowing of just over half a trillion pounds. As house prices have recovered—and share prices have hit new highs—the



ratio of aggregate net wealth to personal income has now almost recouped the ground lost since 1989 (see chart).

Indeed, if houses, life assurance and pension funds are excluded from the calculation in an attempt to define a "core" measure of net wealth, the consumer balance sheet has never been stronger. What the Bank of England described in the Eighties as a "glacier of liquidity" overhanging the economy is still largely unthawed, monetarists in particular should be sceptical at the neat City consensus for 1998.

As hinted above, this balance sheet strength is not being neutralised by high real interest rates: the opportunity cost of spending today, rather than tomorrow, is if anything rather low when judged against recent experience.

Meanwhile, with the labour market tightening steadily, the incidence of unemployment is now just half what it was in 1993. And whereas in 1993 there were roughly eight potential applicants for each recorded job opening, now there are probably fewer than two. In some areas and occupations, indeed, employers are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit. These developments should

not have come as a surprise. There has been no sign recently of another productivity "miracle", and the sharp rise in labour supply which occurred as baby-boomers and married women entered the labour force is now behind us. Measured unemployment in fact peaked more than 10 years ago, and even when it does eventually begin to rise, once more it is unlikely to rise as far as it did then.

Nor is it the case that job turnover has risen sharply. There is simply little support for the widely believed view that the average worker spends less time these days in any given job. In a recent meeting organised by the Centre for Economic Policy Research, Simon Burgess of the University of Bristol showed that there has been little change in job tenure since the 1970s.

"Jobs for life" may be putting the case a bit strongly, but with the average time spent in a given job running at 18 years for men, and 12 years for women, and with both these figures little changed since 1975, the existence of a new "hire and fire" culture must be questioned.

These figures are not as surprising as they first appear. The recent recession has its epicentre in the South-east, and involved the professional service sector to a greater extent than did the 1980-81 episode (still the benchmark against which many of us from the Celtic and Northern fringes judge recessions). It also coincided with a more competitive environment in the civil service, media and academia. These are all areas which to a great extent dominate the day-to-day debate. But the unspoken mass of workers are in practice much less exposed to these shifts, and it is still not uncommon for people to have been in the same job for as long as 30 or 40 years.

Even if turnover had risen sharply, insecurity need not have risen with it: people often leave jobs voluntarily. Conversely, holding the same job for a great length of time is no guarantee of happiness. But the fact that chattering-class wisdom can be so wrong about something so fundamental warns again against accepting the consensus.

Of course, none of the above need prevent consumers from feeling overburdened or insecure. It may be human nature to believe that the future will be worse than the past—"things ain't what they used to be"—even though the average household has never been as well off, in material terms, as they are today.

This hints perhaps at an existential unease better analysed with reference to the Brothers Karamazov than the writings of economists such as Kaldor, Kalecki or Keynes. But the financial markets and the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee would be well advised not to take the slowdown story for granted just yet. If consumer confidence were to rise to match households' material circumstances, 1998 could yet provide quite a surprise. Happy new year.

Kevin Gardiner is a senior economist and executive director at Morgan Stanley Dean Witter.

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

JOHN WILLCOCK



Sir Brian Pittman, the venerable Lloyds TSB chairman and doyen of high street bankers, has accepted his first ever non-executive directorship—with Michael Green's racy media outfit Carlton Communications.

Sir Brian, now 66, joined Lloyds way back in 1952, and gave up his chief executive post just last February to John Ellwood. Sir Brian's devotion to shareholder value is matched only by his appetite for cost-cutting and branch closures, but this is unlikely to translate itself to Carlton's business strategy.

"Carlton is a very different company than Lloyds, and he could take the position because there will be no conflict of interest," said a Lloyds source.

A Carlton spokesman added: "We're obviously delighted to have him." Half of Carlton's business is in television, the rest in things like processing movie films and producing video cassettes. I look forward to spotting Sir Brian in *The Bill*. He'd make a cracking chief inspector. As at Lloyds, John Robson has retired as director of corporate communications after 11 years at the helm. A former Whitehall civil servant, Mr Robson aims to spend more time sailing. He is succeeded by Geraldine Davies, his former deputy.

GB Railways Group has lost its first finance director, just a year after winning the Anglia franchise (Norwich to Liverpool Street) and floating on AIM.

The company insists Simon Gunn was not pushed—"there is certainly no row going on." The former chartered accountant is in line for a £75,000 pay-off due to his 12-month contract, according to GB Railways. A company spokesperson said: "Mr Gunn is an entrepreneurial type, who likes setting up businesses. He would not expand on his future plans."

Analysts describe the rail company's financial targets as "highly ambitious", and

the company has been touted on a number of occasions since its launch as a bid target for larger rivals.

GB Railways has brought in a temporary replacement for Mr Gunn, Alan Terry, who was formerly information services director for CPC, a food production company. GB says Mr Terry will "fill the breach until we can find an appropriate person with a knowledge of the railway industry."

Granville, the small London based merchant bank, has lost two long-time executives in quick succession. William Drake, a main board director who had been with the group for 17 years, left late last year "to pursue his own interests", according to John McCready, an analyst with Granville Davies, the stockbroking subsidiary, left at Christmas.

A spokeswoman for Granville said yesterday that "neither of them was forced out". She added that the departures were purely coincidental and unconnected to each other. Mr Drake, one of whose ancestors was the swash-buckling Sir Francis Drake, was working on Granville's investment portfolio before he left.

ENIC, the investment vehicle part-owned by Joe Lewis, the Bermuda-based millionaire, has appointed Gerard McSloy as finance director. And quite a chap Mr McSloy appears to be.

Not content with an MA in German literature and a diploma in accountancy, the 40-year-old Brit is fluent in Dutch and German, as well as speaking good French and Spanish, an awe-cold tells me. He's also a martial arts blackbelt, has captained the British Universities volleyball team and has 15 caps for Scotland in the same sport.

Whether he also has a cure for the common cold up his sleeve and can split the atom, time alone will tell. For now Mr McSloy will help ENIC to build up its portfolio of European football clubs, which currently include Vicenza, Aek Athens and Slavia Prague, as well as an option over a quarter of Glasgow Rangers. The group is also courting Bordeaux.

Warren Buffett loves banging on about how being America's second richest man doesn't stop him being just a plain ol' hamburger-munchin', cola-swallin' private investor. How come, then, to read in an advert for Executive Jet in the latest edition of *Forbes* magazine that Mr Buffett's company, Berkshire Hathaway, owns a jet. "It more than pays for itself. That's why I recently changed its name from 'The Indefensible' to 'The Indispensable'."

There's more: "For my family, I bought a 25 per cent interest in Executive Jet's Netjets programme. And do they love it... My wife, Susie, came up for the name for this plane, 'The Richly Deserved'."

As P Scott Fitzgerald observed, the rich are different.

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Sterling	Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	Spot	1 month	3 months
UK	100.00				0.648	0.656	0.674	0.673				
Australia	2.237	2.237	2.237	2.237	1.568	1.568	1.568	1.568				
Canada	0.615	0.615	0.615	0.615	1.293	1.293	1.293	1.293				
France	6.547	6.547	6.547	6.547	1.293	1.293	1.293	1.293				
Germany	1.936	1.936	1.936	1.936	1.293	1.293	1.293	1.293				
Italy	2.014	2.014	2.014	2.014	1.293	1.293	1.293	1.293				
Japan	161.2	161.2	161.2	161.2	1.293	1.293	1.293	1.293				
Netherlands	2.203	2.203	2.203	2.203	1.293	1.293	1.293	1.293				
Spain	166.3	166.3	166.3	166.3	1.293	1.293	1.293	1.293				
Sweden	136.5	136.5	136.5	136.5	1.293	1.293	1.293	1.293				
Switzerland	1.483	1.483	1.483	1.483	1.293	1.293	1.293	1.293				
US	1.546	1.546	1.546	1.546	1.293	1.293	1.293	1.293				

Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar	Spot	1 month	3 months
Argentina	1.000				0.000			
Brazil	1.000				0.000			
Canada	1.000				0.000			
France	1.000				0.000			
Germany	1.000				0.000			
Italy	1.000				0.000			
Japan	1.000				0.000			
Netherlands	1.000				0.000			
Spain	1.000				0.000			
Sweden	1.000				0.000			
Switzerland	1.000				0.000			
US	1.000				0.000			

Interest Rates

Country	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months
UK	7.25%				5.00%				
France	5.50%				4.50%				
Germany	5.50%				4.50%				
Italy	5.50%				4.50%				
Japan	5.50%				4.50%				
Netherlands	5.50%				4.50%				
Spain	5.50%				4.50%				
Sweden	5.50%				4.50%				
Switzerland	5.50%				4.50%				
US	5.50%				4.50%				

Bond Yields

Country	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months
UK	7.25%				5.00%				
France	5.50%				4.50%				
Germany	5.50%				4.50%				
Italy	5.50%				4.50%				
Japan	5.50%				4.50%				
Netherlands	5.50%				4.50%				
Spain	5.50%				4.50%				
Sweden	5.50%				4.50%				
Switzerland	5.50%				4.50%				
US	5.50%				4.50%				

Money Market Rates

Country	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months
UK	7.25%				5.00%				
France	5.50%				4.50%				
Germany	5.50%				4.50%				
Italy	5.50%				4.50%				
Japan	5.50%				4.50%				
Netherlands	5.50%				4.50%				
Spain	5.50%				4.50%				
Sweden	5.50%				4.50%				
Switzerland	5.50%				4.50%				
US	5.50%				4.50%				

Commodity Prices

Country	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months
UK	7.25%				5.00%				
France	5.50%				4.50%				
Germany	5.50%				4.50%				
Italy	5.50%				4.50%				
Japan	5.50%				4.50%				
Netherlands	5.50%				4.50%				
Spain	5.50%				4.50%				
Sweden	5.50%				4.50%				
Switzerland	5.50%				4.50%				
US	5.50%				4.50%				

Life Financial Futures

Country	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months
UK	7.25%				5.00%				
France	5.50%				4.50%				
Germany	5.50%				4.50%				
Italy	5.50%				4.50%				
Japan	5.50%				4.50%				
Netherlands	5.50%				4.50%				
Spain	5.50%				4.50%				
Sweden	5.50%				4.50%				
Switzerland	5.50%				4.50%				
US	5.50%				4.50%				

Energy

Country	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months
UK	7.25%				5.00%				
France	5.50%				4.50%				
Germany	5.50%				4.50%				
Italy	5.50%				4.50%				
Japan	5.50%				4.50%				
Netherlands	5.50%				4.50%				
Spain	5.50%				4.50%				
Sweden	5.50%				4.50%				
Switzerland	5.50%				4.50%				
US	5.50%				4.50%				

Commodity Indices

Country	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months
UK	7.25%				5.00%				
France	5.50%				4.50%				
Germany	5.50%				4.50%				
Italy	5.50%				4.50%				
Japan	5.50%				4.50%				
Netherlands	5.50%				4.50%				
Spain	5.50%				4.50%				
Sweden	5.50%				4.50%				
Switzerland	5.50%				4.50%				
US	5.50%				4.50%				

Industrial Metals

Country	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar	Rate	Spot	1 month	3 months
UK	7.25%				5.00%				
France	5.50%				4.50%				
Germany	5.50%				4.50%				
Italy	5.50%				4.50%				
Japan	5.50%				4.50%				
Netherlands	5.50%				4.50%				
Spain	5.50%				4.50%				
Sweden	5.50%				4.50%				
Switzerland	5.50%				4.50%				

...and I am
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CRICKET

West Indies opt for Lara's leadership against England

Brian Lara, one of the most celebrated and controversial characters in international cricket, was named yesterday as captain of the West Indies for the series against England.

Craig Cozier reports from Bridgetown, Barbados.

Brian Lara was named West Indies' captain yesterday for the five Tests and five one-day internationals against England, starting 29 January. He acknowledged he was stepping into a role that is far from easy.

"It's a great honour, but it's a very tricky seat to be in at this moment in West Indies cricket," Lara said. "It is a challenging and exciting role. I'm looking forward to great things from myself and from my players."

The 28-year-old record-breaking batsman replaces Courtney Walsh, the fast bowler who led the West Indies in 17 Tests after succeeding Richie Richardson following the 1996 World Cup. The decision represented an about-turn by the West Indies Cricket Board, who

rejected the selectors' nomination of Lara as captain for the tours of Pakistan and Sharjah in November and December, retaining Walsh instead.

Support for Lara has been growing since the West Indies were soundly beaten in all three Tests in Pakistan under Walsh, a 36-year-old veteran of 96 Tests. It was the first time the West Indies had lost every match of a Test series since 1928 in England. They also lost three one-day internationals to Sri Lanka, Pakistan and South Africa in the Golden Jubilee tournament in Pakistan and were defeated by England in the final of the Champions' Trophy in Sharjah.

Lara has been Walsh's deputy for the past four series against Australia, India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. When an injured Walsh missed the Barbados match against India last March, Lara led the West Indies to victory in his only Test as captain.

A stylish, stroke-playing left-hander, Lara holds the world records for both Test and first-class innings and is regarded as one of the finest batsmen of his time. He has scored 10 centuries in amassing 4,133 runs at an average of 51.66 in his 48 Tests. His 375 against England in

the fifth Test in Antigua in 1994 eclipsed the record of 365 not out set by another West Indian left-hander, Sir Gary Sobers. Lara followed that six weeks later with an unbeaten 501 for Warwickshire against Durham in the County Championship.

Lara has been groomed for the captaincy since he was a teenager. He led the West Indies team to the first youth World Cup in Australia in 1988, was made the youngest captain of his native Trinidad and Tobago at 20 and led the West Indies A team to Zimbabwe at 21. He will return to Warwickshire in the summer as captain for the first time.

Lara's poor disciplinary record has probably delayed his promotion to Test captaincy. He has been fined or warned for disciplinary reasons four times in the past three years. Once he reportedly said he would retire at a stormy team meeting during the 1995 tour of England after a clash with his captain, Richardson. He was persuaded to change his mind, but was fined 10 per cent of his fee.

His most recent transgression came during the home series against Sri Lanka last June when he was fined for reporting late prior to the first Test.

FOOTBALL

Spurs sign Berti from Inter

Nicola Berti was reported to have moved from the Serie A leaders, Internazionale, to Tottenham Hotspur, according to a spokesman for the Italian club.

The spokesman would not reveal financial details of the deal, though it was reported that Inter did not receive a fee. Spurs will pay out the rest of Berti's contract, worth around £350,000 a year.

Berti, 30, had requested a transfer recently because of limited playing time this season, his

10th with the club. A member of the Italian team which reached the final of the 1994 World Cup, Berti has scored 41 goals in 312 games with the Milan club.

Spurs' English transfer target, Andy Hinchcliffe, is set to complete a £3m move to north London from Everton today. The 28-year-old international has agreed terms, and will move subject to a medical.

On Tuesday the Hinchcliffe deal had looked under threat because the player had asked for

a signing-on fee from Tottenham which Spurs did not seem willing to pay. Hinchcliffe will get a loyalty bonus from Everton in the region of £500,000 for not asking for the transfer, agreed when he signed a five-year deal earlier this season.

However, Spurs' move for Valencia's Algerian international midfielder, Moussa Saib, has been put on hold. Transfer negotiations will not resume until March.

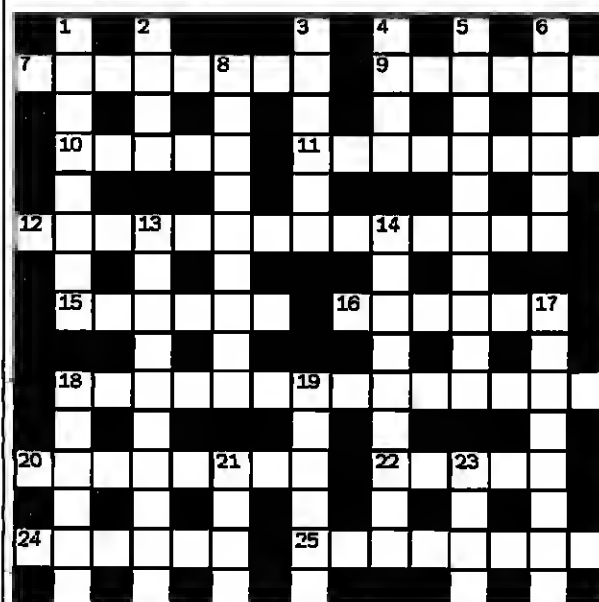
— Ian Rodgers

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 582, Thursday 8 January

By Mass

Wednesday's solution

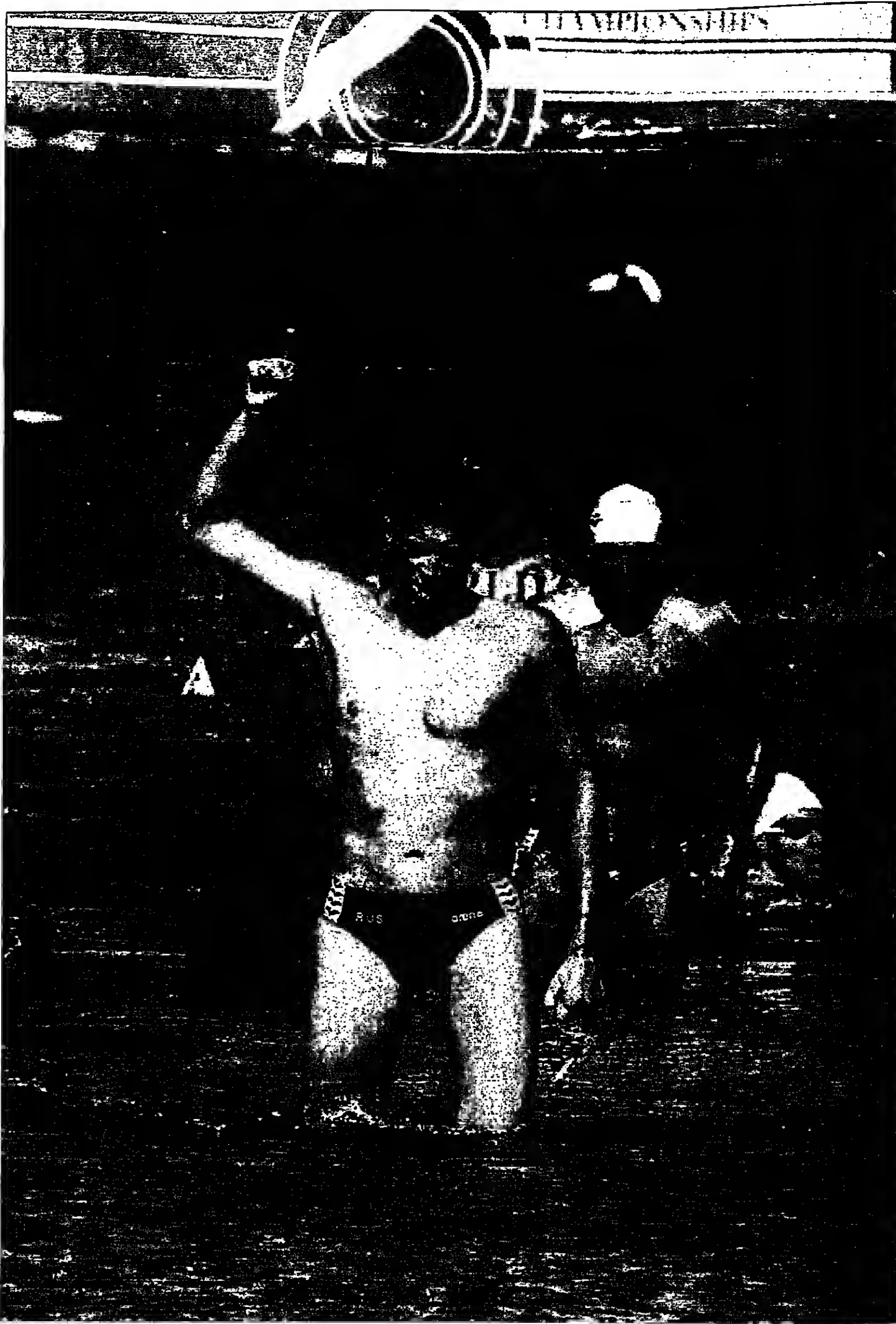


ACROSS
1. Writer makes cuts, reportedly approved (8)
9. Editor's inwardly badgered, worn out (6)
10. Kentish fellow's cutting back branch growths (5)
11. Lean time acquiring the Parisian article of clothing (8)
12. Course additive, excluding chips etc (10,4)
15. Abolish disc in form of coin (6)
16. Shrub in plaza, leafing (6)
18. Sporting red braid, a fop is a colourful creature (4,2,8)

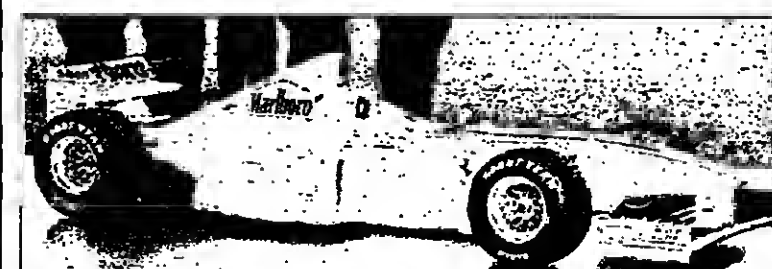
DOWN
1. Ornate iron fret for border (8)
2. Cast (or threw) one out (4)
3. It's yours for life (6)
4. Dandy tie, from what we hear (4)
5. Checked most of ice, then fished (10)
6. Remove obstruction in river (6)

8. Reckless type from spree crashed into section of wall (9)
13. Ace? Mine's played in effort to prove a point (10)
14. Endless fog on winding road American finds risky (9)
17. Corresponded, in more senses than one (8)
18. Save Knight, finally, with Queen exchange (6)
19. Building's in a state with fabric full of holes (6)
21. Parting word evokes depression (4)
23. Playing up on right results in a corner (4)

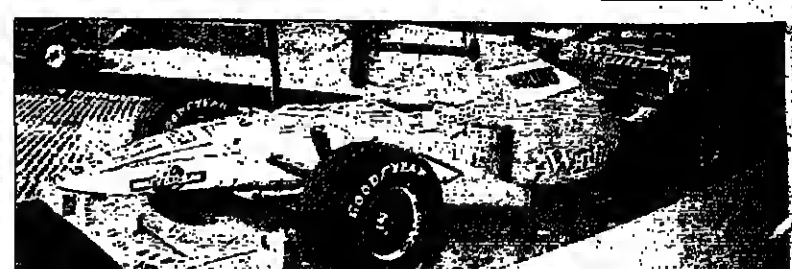
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Alexei Akatiev emerges from the sea after winning the 5km open water event at the World Swimming Championships in Perth, Australia, yesterday. The Russian overtook Australian teenager Ky Hurst about 400 metres from the finish to take the first gold medal of the event. Photograph: AP



Identity parade: The new-look Williams (right) will be taking on the new Ferrari at more than one level this season. Photographs: Allsport/Emu



Formula One's new twist on Henry Ford – any colour car you like, as long as it is red.

Murray Walker may well be offering up a quiet word of thanks that McLaren changed their colours from red and white to silver last season following yesterday's unveiling of the new Ferrari and Williams grand prix cars.

Formula One's two main title contenders for the 1998-99 season have thrown off their robes to reveal in the red corner, the Prancing Horse, traditionally associated with a scarlet livery, while in the... corner are Williams.

Tobacco sponsorship has again flexed its muscles and so the blue and white car that has taken both Nigel Mansell and Damon Hill to the world championship in the past decade is no more. Red-packaged Winfield has replaced Rothmans as the Oxfordshire-based team's main sponsor, and so Walker's going to have to hope for some creative helmet design to assist his commentary.

The 1998 Ferrari F300 was launched at Ferrari headquarters in Maranello, Italy, yesterday, with a new objective – winning the championship. Luca Montezemolo, the president of Ferrari, said: "This is the first time we can say with firm belief that next season we want to win the championship."

This is also the first time a car has been completely designed and built at Maranello, the work of their chief designer, Rory Byrne, and the technical director, Ross Brawn, who took Michael Schumacher to two world championships at Benetton. The car will be powered by a brand new engine by Paolo Martinelli, who said that it was the first time in years that the engine and chassis department had worked hand in hand.

The application of a little rouge will not be the only change on the grand prix circuit. Motor sport's governing body has introduced several new measures in an attempt to slow cars down and protect drivers. Cars will be narrower, which affects the aerodynamics, and will run on grooved tyres, which give the car less grip. To keep the grooves at the required depth, teams will have to use harder compound tyres, slowing the cars by about three seconds a lap at most circuits.

But the question everybody wanted answered in Maranello yesterday was whether Ferrari were bothered about Williams' new guise. "I'm sure that if you were to ask 1,000 F1 fans which was motor racing's red car, they would say Ferrari. The last colour in the world I'm scared of is red," Montezemolo said.

— Catherine Riley

ON

IN THE INDEPENDENT PAGE 250

Holiday Inn

Holiday Inn Garden Court

ALL YEAR ROUND
SHORT BREAK OFFERS
AT HOTELS ACROSS
THE UK

THE
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Residents of the seaside town
coming to terms with the loss of
break, corned beef and a slice of
long and quarter of a pound of
were flying sheep from the
upgraded but not yet...